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UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR.

ART. I.

Trial of Faith.

It is undoubtedly true that the abstruse reasoning of learned divines, who have bestowed unwearied labors on different and conflicting theories of divinity, has not only confused their own minds, but led thousands of others into labyrinths of inexplicable mysteries, from the perplexities of which the strength of their minds was not sufficient to lead them. Such are the limits of human capacity and intellect, that it is much safer for man to attempt to arrive at profitable knowledge by easy and simple means, than to risk his faculties in researches beyond the narrow bounds of his comprehension. This conclusion seems to be justified by the important fact, that we may, by the most easy and simple means, arrive at the knowledge of the most useful things; while it is equally true that most if not all, the subjects of metaphysical and learned disquisitions are of such a nature as to hold but a slight connexion with our enjoyments, and can exert but a doubtful influence in forming or in giving any directions to our moral characters. We shall find also that truth in relation to the common concerns of life and the means of securing our temporal happiness, is of the same character. That knowledge which is the most useful, and without which we could not subsist, is the most easily obtained; while that which contributes rather to the conveniencies and luxuries of life is found out by scientific researches

and doubtful experiments.

We propose to follow the directions of the theory above suggested, for the purpose of presenting our readers, in this short article, with a plain, simple criterion, by which our faith or belief, concerning divine things, may be sufficiently tested. To assist us in this attempt we call to our aid the following passage of holy writ. Rom. xv, 13. 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.'

The rule, prescribed in this passage, by which we may try the soundness of our religious belief, directs us to the consideration of the question, whether our belief fills us with joy and peace. By the use of this simple rule we can just as easily determine whether what we believe is according to truth, or not, as we can whether our food is wholesome, or injurious to our

health, by the effects we experience from it.

That believing the gospel or believing in Christ, is always attended with joyful effects, we may learn from the following scriptures. 1 Peter i, 8: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.' This declaration is evidently in support of the hypothesis we mean to maintain, as it clearly shows that the immediate cause of that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory, was the belief which christians exercised. Phil. i, 25: 'And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.' By this scripture we learn that St Paul understood that the furtherance of faith would be attended with an increase of joy. 1 John i, 4: 'And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.' It appears by this passage that a belief of the things which the apostle wrote, would give the fulness of joy. Rom. v, 2: 'By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' By faith the christian is enabled to rejoice in hope. Gal. v. 22, 23: 'But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' we learn that true faith is found among the fruits which the spirit of the gospel produces, and that joy and peace are connected with it. Many other passages might be quoted in support of the fact that joy and peace are necessarily attendant on true faith.

It may be proper here to ask if there be any intimation, in any passage of divine truth, that true faith in the gospel of Christ causes sorrow and trouble? By looking on both sides of this question we shall at once become fully satisfied that true faith in Christ embraces no subject that is productive of sorrow and trouble; but that contrariwise, every truth, essential to the gospel, is matter of rejoicing to him who believeth.

This subject is capable of an illustration ever so extensive, by an attention to those particular subjects, which the faith of the christian embraces. A few of these may be mentioned.

I. The foundation of the christian faith is the existence of one only and true God, by whom are all things; who governs the whole universe according to the dictates of unerring wisdom and universal infinite goodness. This doctrine was taught by Jesus; not as one of those points of debate between him and his enemies; for they also acknowledged such a Being, though they were ignorant of those necessary influences which are deducible from such a doctrine. He said to one who called him, 'good master,' 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.' This God he always addressed by the appellation of Father, and directed his disciples to address him by the same endearing name. To this Being he ascribed more power than to all other beings. He said, John x, 29: 'My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' To this almighty Being Jesus also ascribed, more knowledge than to any other. He said, Mark xiii, 32: 'But of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father.' Jesus moreover taught that the protecting providence of our heavenly Father is minutely applied to all creatures. See Matt. x, 29-31: 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing; and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.' To our heavenly Father, Jesus also attributed more compassion than earthly fathers have for their children: as we read Matt. vii, 9-11: Or what man is there of you whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts

unto your children, how much more shall your Father which

is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?'

If we carefully examine the character which the passages just cited, attribute to God, we shall find nothing wanting to render it perfectly acceptable to the believing heart. And it will also be perceived that a confident belief in such a God is necessarily productive of joy and peace to the believer. With what a holy calm, with what serenity of feeling, with what extacy of joy, with what indescribable peace, does the believing heart contemplate the existence of such a Being! On the contrary, to deny the existence of our heavenly Father, is as fatal to the happiness of the rational mind, as the blotting out of the sun would be to vegetation and all our earthly comforts.

II. The doctrine of the divine forgiveness is one of the essential points of the christian faith. No particular subject was more forcibly taught by Jesus, nor did he more clearly carry any to an extent altogether unlimited. In his controversy with Simon, the Pharisee, as recorded in Luke vii, we have an instance in which this doctrine is set forth in a truly wonderful manner. Because Jesus suffered a sinful woman to anoint him with ointment, to wash his feet with her tears, to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and to kiss them, the Pharisee concluded that he was no prophet; and said, verse 39, 'this man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?' Simon was now compelled to answer in a way to refute his own uncharitable conclusion and remark, respecting the divine teacher. He said, 'I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.' The Saviour's reply was as follows; 'Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and seid to Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me

no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not . ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' A very slight attention to the complaints which the enemies of Jesus made against him and the nature of his defence against them, will discover a dispensation of divine favor, which in room of being frustrated or rendered void by the sinfulness of man, is justified by it as necessary and right. We have a case of this nature recorded Matt. ix, 10, &c. 'And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Again in Luke xv, this controversy is set forth in most a striking manner. It seems, according to the account, that a very numerous concourse of publicans and sinners had collected, for the purpose of hearing Jesus. At this the Pharisees and scribes were offended. They murmured, and said; 'This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.' In his reply, the divine teacher gave his enemies to understand, that the compassions which he showed to sinners, and of which they complained, were justified, first, by what any of them would do in reclaiming one sheep which should wander from a numerous flock; and secondly, by the rejoicing of the angels of heaven, over one sinner that should repent.

In relation to this controversy, two important facts are strikingly manifest. First, the more merciful Jesus showed himself to be, the more were his enemies offended; and secondly, the more sinful people were, the greater was the necessity of the divine favor, and the greater would be the joy of holy beings in their reconciliation. This dispensation of divine forgiveness is like the water in Ezekiel's vision, risen water, which

no man could pass.

A confident belief in this heavenly doctrine cannot fail to fill the heart with joy and peace. When we are conscious that

our sins are many, when they lie as heavy burdens upon us, and press us down as in the dust; when it seems that our own consciences have become implacable, and scarcely a hope remains that we can ever forgive ourselves, how cheering, how reviving is the light of the divine countenance, and the assurance of the forgiveness of our heavenly Father! Deprive the christian of this inestimable truth, and you render him as unblessed as the darkness of despair. A garden of the sweetest and most fragrant flowers is turned into a dismal hedge of thorns and thistles.

III. The impartiality of the divine goodness, and the universality of redeeming mercy constitute an important truth which is embraced in the christian faith. On this subject Jesus and his apostles have left ample testimony. It may be well, in this place, to notice some of their declarations on this vast subject. As recorded Matt. v. Jesus demonstrated the impartiality of the divine love by the well known fact, that God causes his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sends his rain upon the just, and upon the unjust. Never did a master endeavor more earnestly to elevate the mind, and exalt the understandings of his scholars, than did Jesus those of his disciples on this interesting subject. He said, 'If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect!' In this article of the christian faith, the believer is not only made acquainted with the truth of God's impartial goodness towards mankind, but he is also shown that in order to walk acceptably to God he must love his enemies, and pray for those who hate and persecute him.

In view of his sufferings and death, which lay in near prospect before him, Jesus said, John xii, 32: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' This was the joy which was set before him, for which he endured the cross and despised the shame. The believer in Jesus contemplates the cross of the Redeemer as the sure pledge of universal reconciliation to God, agreeably to the declaration of St Paul, Col. i, 19, 20: 'For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace by the blood of the cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him,

I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.' On this most interesting subject, the same apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians thus writes: chap. i, 7—10: 'In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his gace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispentation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.'

As it is not so much our object, in this article to prove certain points of faith, by quoting the written testimony, as it is to present them to the reader as subjects productive of joy and peace, we need only state them in the language of divine inspiration, recommending to the reader to search the Scrip-

tures respecting them, at his leisure.

It is true, that to the enemies of Jesus and his religion, the doctrine of universal reconciliation affords no joy; to them it yields no peace. There is much profitable instruction as well as severe admonition in the saying of the Saviour to his opposers, who accused him of his friendship for sinners, which we find recorded Luke xv, 7: 'I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.' The instruction here given, justifies the Saviour in the blessed work of reconciling sinners to God, on the ground that it is matter of rejoicing to holy beings; and the admonition shows that those who are offended at the salvation of sinners, are unlike those holy ones who rejoice in this work.

To the believer in Jesus, to the friend of the gospel, to the benevolent heart that dilates with generous love to all mankind, the belief that finally the fulness of the human family, who have wandered in darkness, shall meet in the everlasting light of heavenly wisdom; who have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, shall enjoy a free justification by the grace of the Redeemer; who have lived in enmity, hating one another, shall meet in love, to part no more, is, indeed, a subject of unspeakable joy. We will not ask the enemies of Jesus and his gospel whether they could rejoice in the belief of universal reconciliation. We know their opposition to this blessed truth; they have not labored in vain to show to

the world that they have no communion with such a sentiment. But we will ask the true believer, who believes and loves this truth, what his feelings would be, could he, for one hour, believe that even one unhappy wanderer of the sinful race of man, would be forever doomed to mental darkness? We would not torture the tender affections of the parental heart; but that we may realize the joy and peace of our faith, let us ask what that parent's grief would be, what unutterable anguish he would feel, who should for one hour despair of the salvation of a beloved child? Turning from thoughts so full of horror, so deeply wounding to the sensitive heart, with what indescribable joy and peace does the believing parent look on his children as the purchased possession of him who gave himself a ransom for all men, to be testified in due time? who confidently believes that those whom he fondly loves are heirs of that blessed inheritance 'which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them?

IV. Though we have already, in some degree, anticipated the subject, we shall here more distinctly state that the true believer embraces in his faith that glorious life and immortality. which are brought to light through the gospel. In this all important article of his faith, the believing christian enjoys that blessed 'hope, which is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' On this subject Jesus was remarkably explicit in his answer to the Sadducees, who denied the doctrine of the resurrection. See Matt. xxii, 29-32, 'Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you, by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living!' Where this answer of Jesus is recorded in Luke xx, it is said in verse 36, 'Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.' St Paul is remarkably full and clear on this subject, in 1 Cor. xv, 21, 22: 'For since by man, came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For

as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' This article of the christian faith is, if possible, the brightest and most precious jewel of all. It sheds a mild radiance on all creation, and gives an unfading beauty to every object. Confident in this faith, the christian can survey the vast scene of human sufferings, in this mortal state, and see the whole, with death itself, swallowed up in a victory unspeakably glorious. 'Joy and peace' reign triumphant here, and yield that rest of which St Paul thus speaks, Heb. iv, 3, 'For we which have believed do enter into rest.' Possessed of this heavenly treasure, the disciple of Jesus, though as destitute as was his divine master, who had not where to lay his head, enjoys a consolation which he would not exchange for the wealth and splendor of courts.

To the christian, a moment's doubt is a moment of darkness; unbelief would render him forlorn. The night to his mental vision would be destitute of a single ray of light; not a star would appear in the heavens. Faith, in this instance, is joy and peace; unbelief is moral death.

V. There is one article more which we cannot persuade ourselves to omit, although we are extending this article farther than was first intended. It is the joy inspiring belief, that all and every part of the immense scheme of the gospel, embracing the fulness of whatever infinite wisdom and goodness have planned in favor of the human family, depend altogether on the will and power of God, 'who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.' In contemplating this important truth, the believing heart is filled 'with all joy and peace.' Standing on this rock, the christian surveys the humiliating scene of human weakness, imperfection, dependence, errors, faults and follies; together with all the vile depravity and misery of mankind; he sees those dark and multitudinous waters tossing their fearful waves hideously around him; yet his feet are unmoved; his eyes are fixt on that ever bright, that never setting star, in which his faith finds rest.

Now, the reader may examine either or all of the five particulars, which have been pointed out, as embraced in the christian faith, and determine at once, whether a confident belief in any one or all of them, is naturally productive of joy and

peace. He may also satisfy himself whether he can disbelieve any one of these propositions without bringing to his heart sorrow in place of joy, and trouble in room of peace. And from these examples the christian may learn to try the genuineness of whatever may be stated, as having claims on his faith. 'If we or an angel from heaven' urge him to believe what will destroy his joy and take away his peace, let him still 'hold fast the profession of his faith, without wavering.'

H. B.

ART. II.

Ministerial Duties and Qualifications.

IT will be admitted, by all who are conversant with the present state of religion in this country, that the denomination to whose interests this publication is devoted, has received, within the last twenty years, great additions to its numbers. Nor will it be seriously denied, that its influence has been considerably extended. It has now attained to a respectable standing among the various sects; and such has been the rapidity of its advance, that the friends, as well as the opponents, of liberal principles, have been surprised, that its peculiar, and we had almost said peculiarly unpopular, sentiments, should have been received so readily, and with so much cordiality, and to such an extent, by persons who were, generally speaking, educated in a manner quite unfriendly to an innovation of this kind. And, should we leave out of the account, the inherent and resistless potency of truth, it would be difficult, and we think impossible, to account, in a rational and satisfactory manner, for the widely extended, and still extending influence of Universalism. will not do to say that its success must be attributed to any predisposition of the public mind to receive it; for it is well known that popular prejudice was decidedly against it. Nor can its advancement be attributed to any congeniality between the sentiment, and the feelings and emotions of the natural heart: for the arguments in its favor have not been addressed to persons uninfluenced by impressions of education. Neither can it

in truth be said, that the change of which we speak, as having been wrought in the minds of the people, is to be imputed to the influence of human learning or wisdom. The cause of Universalism has had to contend against almost everything that usually contributes to the success of religious sentiments. After having lain dormant for ages, it was brought before the public in the character of something new; and, as it could not, from the very nature of the case, appeal to the passions, with any prospect of rendering them subservient to its advancement. it was left to make its way to public favor, by an open and direct application of its proofs to the understandings of mankind.

If we trace the annals of our order with ever so much care. we shall search in vain for the evidence of its claims having been supported by what the world would call a learned and efficient ministry. True, among the number of its advocates there have been some, who have ranked with the most learned ecclesiastics of their times; but they have been few indeed. We may mention the names of Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Jerome, and many others among the ancients; and Chauncy, Murray, Winchester, and others of modern times, as public advocates of Universalism, who were by no means deficient in substantial literary qualifications; but our learned men have been the Pauls among their brethren. But one among many, has been favored with having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. There never has been a time, when it would not have been proper, to apply to the universalist ministry the language of the apostle—' For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.' So far, however, from mentioning these facts with a view of detracting anything from the value of those ministerial labors which have been so signally blessed, to the edification and improvement of the human race, we refer to them as so many instances strikingly illustrative of what may be done, under unfavorable circumstances, when the heart is enlisted in the cause of God and truth. It is with a just pride, that we call to mind the names, and exemplary virtues, the zeal,

and uncompromising devotedness, the sufferings, and triumphs, of living and departed worthies, who were the pioneers in the same work in which we are engaged; and when we reflect upon the great good which has resulted from their labors, it becomes the prevailing desire of our hearts, that God would enable us to emulate their virtues and imitate their examples.

Nor do we mean to offend the manes of the departed, nor excite the apprehension in the breasts of the living, that we are becoming fastidious, when we advance the opinion, that the time has arrived when it is expedient, and necessary, that some improvement should be introduced among us, of the kind which comes properly within the scope of this article. To say that a higher order of ministerial qualification is now required, than was formerly essential to the success and prosperity of the cause, is but to say that we have fallen upon better times, and that our intellectual and moral circumstances have been greatly improved—it is but to say, that the truth has found its way to the enlightened understandings of mankind, and requires more skill in the culture, than it did in the preparation of the soil. It most evidently detracts nothing from the just fame of our predecessors, to say that talents and qualifications are now required, which were not indispensable half a century since: but it is a well deserved encomium upon the zeal, ability, and faithfulness, of those whose labors imparted such an impetus to the work of improvement, that we dare not stand still, lest we should be left behind, by the spirit of the age, to vegetate and die among things that are forgotten. Leaving, therefore, the claims of the departed upon the respect of mankind, to rest upon the foundation of their pre-eminent usefulness, and those of the living to be passed upon by a discriminating public, we shall indulge a few reflections, and throw out a few hints, respecting the qualifications which may be looked for in those who may hereafter aspire to the honor of being useful to their fellow beings, by engaging in the divine work of the ministry of reconciliation.

Preparatory to the observations which we are about to submit, it may not be altogether irrelevant to remark, that there is abundant proof, of which we might avail ourselves, if necessary, to show that it is among the designs of God, to have well qualified, and duly appointed persons set apart to the work of instructing mankind in the principles of his saving and sanctifying grace. The choice of these persons, and, consequently,

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the prerogative of judging of their qualifications, have been committed, under the guidance of infinite wisdom, to the members of the visible church. Since the period when it was essential to the permanent establishment of christianity, that some extraordinary proofs of the sacredness of their office should be required and given, ministers of the gospel have been selected with reference to their real or supposed fitness for the calling. And, since the aid of miracles has been withheld, it has been deemed indispensable, that candidates for the ministry should be able to refer to the law and the testimony, and draw from thence 'things new and old,' to evidence to the world their confidence in, respect for, and ability to defend, the great truths of the gospel. It has thence become a desideratum, to have those who contemplate taking upon themselves the responsibilities of the office, qualified to make good their claims upon the respect of mankind, as the accredited heralds of the gospel, by showing, that, if they have not been with Christ, they have at least become familiar with his doctrine, and know how to estimate the morality which it enjoins upon us. While, therefore, we admit that it was the design of God, to have a class of men set apart to the office of the ministry, we are constrained to deny that it is necessary that they should be selected with reference to any supernatural qualifications. Nor can we place any reliance upon apostolical succession, other than a perpetuation of that love and those graces which warmed the bosoms and adorned the lives of the early promulgators of the gospel. And, while we affirm that it is the height of arrogance to pretend to any supernatural endowments, we would take the more earnest heed to those natural and acquired qualifications, without which even the gift of tongues would be unavailing.

I. Of the appropriate Duties of Ministers.

It will be convenient to consider the duties which devolve on ministers of the gospel as of two kinds—viz: First, those connected with their public labors; Secondly, those which relate to their intercourse with mankind. It is intended to bestow a

few remarks upon each kind separately.

First: In regard to the public labors of the gospel minister, we know not of any rule that will be of greater utility, than to have him take the Bible as the man of his counsel, and to treat it with all the deference and respect, to which its sacredness and importance entitle it. But in saying this, we do not mean that he should receive it for anything more than it purports to be.

The opinions of others, however venerable, or however extensively they may be received, can but poorly compensate a teacher of religion for the absence of confidence in his own judgment, or for the want of that independence without which he cannot command the confidence of others. If we are not greatly deceived, much evil may result from a too strict adherence to the opinions of others in regard to the Bible itself. It may be taken for more, and certainly for less, than it is. Either would be prejudicial to the interests of religion. What we contend for, is, that a gospel minister should take the Bible as his directory; and, in the full exercise and enjoyment of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free, should speak as becometh the oracles of God, and in a manner which shall comport with the dignity and independence of man.

Receiving the Bible as the sacred repository of truth, and as the infallible guide to a just practice, it becomes the duty of the minister of Christ, to explain its doctrines, and enforce upon the hearts and consciences of mankind, its moral principles. Let us not be misunderstood. We object not to discussions of other subjects besides the doctrine and morality of the gospel, by proper persons, and on proper occasions; but we do say, that gospel doctrine, and gospel morality, are the great themes upon which the minister of Christ is bound to dwell, with a pathos and earnestness proportionate to their importance. And that person is but poorly qualified for his situation, who does not see, in these topics, matters of sufficient interest to engage much of his time; and of variety sufficient to call into active exercise his best and noblest powers of mind. And that man is to be pitied, who, from mistaken motives, has entered the ministry without feeling the importance of these subjects; for his plodding course must necessarily be unattended by any alleviating circumstances; and his labors will be little less irksome than those of the galley slave at the oar. Severe, indeed, must be the trials of those who are forever apprehensive of being unable to find subjects of sufficient interest to awaken their own attention; or of sufficient importance to engage that of their hearers.

Nor is it a duty of the least importance, to endeavor, by all proper means, to render the explanation and enforcement of truth, interesting and agreeable to those who hear. It has been often and justly said, that the senses constitute the medium through which truth finds its way to the heart; and how-

ever seriously mankind may be inclined to bestow their attention upon the public administration of the word; however strongly or deeply it may be impressed upon their minds that it is a religious duty to do so; or however weighty may be the truths spread before them; unless the manner of the speaker is interesting and impressive, though it may come from the heart, his communication will never reach the heart, nor enlist the affections. If, therefore, it be the duty of the minister. to strive to be useful, it is no less his duty to endeavor to render his manner agreeable. The duties of ministers and people are, strictly speaking, reciprocal. If it be the duty of the people to hear, with due respect and seriousness, the public communications of the man they have chosen to instruct them, it is no less his duty, to leave no means untried, to render his services acceptable. For no argument can convince mankind that they are under any religious obligation to be pleased with that which is disgusting; or to be passively indifferent to any gross violation of good taste. It is difficult to decide which is most reprehensible, an offensive manner, in the desk, or the assurance of those, who, after committing an error of this sort, express their astonishment that the people are indifferent, or have imbibed a dislike of their performances. We are far from wishing to encourage an unreasonable fastidiousness on the part of the people—we would not have them superfluously exact; still, since reason has little to do with matters of taste, we find it not in our hearts to condemn them for not being pleased with that which is disagreeable. Nor can we dismiss this topic without making the remark, that the people are often censured for their indifference to subjects confessedly important, when much of their lamentable coldness is attributable to a want of attention, on the part of the complainant, to the duty under consideration. Reserving a specification of particular faults, for its proper place, we proceed to notice,

Secondly: Those duties which devolve upon ministers in their intercourse with mankind. And in view of their importance, we regret that our limits will not allow of as free a discussion of these matters, as would be profitable, and desirable,

had we the ability to do them justice.

We take it as granted, that a minister of the gospel is bound to cultivate and practise the moral virtues, the same as other men. Indeed, persuasions addressed to others, to induce them to walk in the statutes of the Lord blameless, come with a bad grace from the lips of one whose 'walk and conversation' are not constantly influenced by gospel rules. But those general rules which are laid down in the christian code, for the instruction and guidance of mankind; or even those which are especially binding upon professors of religion, though good and sufficient as far as they go, do not, it is conceived, go far enough in prescribing the line of conduct to be pursued by the teachers of religion. This, if it need any explanation, may be understood from the remark, that what would be measurably proper in the conduct of a private christian, might be highly indecorous in that of one set apart as an instructer of others. For the good opinion of the world is indispensable to the success of a preacher of the gospel; and, in order to secure that good opinion, he must be particularly circumspect and exemplary. It is not enough that his moral conduct is free from the pollutions of vice; his life must be adorned with the virtues and graces of christianity; that he may be a 'bright and shining light' before the world; furnishing, in his examples, perpetual illustrations of the practicability of every precept he enjoins upon others. By this, we do not mean that he should deny himself the enjoyments of social life; nor that he should, in trying to become an example to the believers in sincerity and gravity, suffer himself to be transformed into a fault-finding. and censorious enthusiast. We would rather insist upon his being circumspect, without fastidiousness; familiar, without vulgarity; cheerful, without levity; dignified, without ostentation; generous, without prodigality; and capable of commanding respect, without seeming to consider it the chief object of his pursuit.

We shall be excused for entering somewhat more into detail. It would seem to be a part of the duty of a minister of the gospel, in his intercourse with mankind, to endeavor to render himself an example of good manners, as well as of good morals. It has been remarked, by some writer of eminence, that no man can be a christian, without at the same time being a gentleman. The idea is a good one, and is especially applicable to the case under consideration; for a clownish or uncouth manner derogates much from the dignity of an office which has for its object the improvement, and moral refinement, of the human race. There is a peculiar incompatibility between the spirit of a religion which enjoins good will and condescension upon all, and that uncompromising selfishness which

seeks its own, and not another's good. True politeness consists, not in an idle pretence of desiring to be of service to another, but in the manifestation of a disposition to suffer some trifling inconvenience, rather than to discommode or displease another. And it will not be thought that we go too far in saying, that a spirit of kindness and condescension should be manifested in the conduct of the servant of Christ. Though by no means the advocate of Chesterfieldian politeness, we may be excused for submitting it for the consideration of those who contemplate entering the ministry, whether it would not be well for them to attend, with some degree of care, to the acquirement of such accomplishments as shall be likely to procure them admittance into the polite circles of society, and pre-

pare them to feel at ease when fairly introduced.

It is difficult to conceive of anything more foreign from the genius of christianity than the deportment of some young men, who, on issuing from the Theological Seminary, come forth into the world inflated with the idea that they are persons of great learning, and much consequence, and influenced, withal, by the secret workings of the spirit of grace. Such persons seem to entertain the notion, that by some indescribable process, they have derived, from the dignity and sacredness of their profession, the right to be insolent with impunity, and to borrow an excuse from their being servants of God, for treating with disrespect the works of his hands. This may be pardonable in those, a part of whose education it is, to be instructed in the trade of saving souls from the wrath of an incensed God; but it would be attended by no palliating circumstances, if discovered in the conduct of those whose employment is to be that of commending the love of Heaven to a sinful and suffering world.

We insist with the more earnestness upon the fact that it is the duty of the minister to pay proper attention to the acquisition of personal accomplishments, knowing, as we do, that his deportment will have an essential influence in forming the habits and manners of the rising generation. Parents, who may feel disposed to have their children fall in the way of good manners as well as good morals, will very reluctantly consent, however strongly attached to the sentiment he may profess, to have them placed within the influence of one, who is either a stranger, or an enemy, to good breeding. They will feel themselves but poorly compensated, by the other good qualities he

may possess, for the risk they run of having the rising genera-

tion disregard the rules of decorum.

It is also a duty of the minister of the gospel, one which grows out of the nature of his calling, to conform himself, and adapt his conduct and conversation, to the circumstances and feelings of those with whom he associates. There are times, when it may be proper and necessary to unbend the mind, and when vivacity is as becoming in the clergyman, as in the man; but there are also occasions, when an approximation to levity will be looked upon as being highly derogatory to the dignity and sacredness of his profession. The same rule of propriety which would forbid that the minister of the gospel should carry into the drawing room the spirit of heaviness, would require that he should enter the house of mourning, and the chamber of sickness, most deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of the message he bears to the afflicted, and of the nature of that religion which teaches us to mourn with those who mourn, as well as to rejoice with those who rejoice. It will destroy the influence of any minister, and by destroying it, render it impossible for him to be useful, to have any degree of lightness, or any want of seriousness apparent in his conduct, while with the afflicted. We can hardly conceive that it is possible for any one having the welfare of mankind at heart, to enter the house of mourning without solemnity, or without feeling interested in their behalf; but should it be otherwise, that want of sensibility would constitute a disqualification for the sacred office, which no knowledge, whether of theories or literature, can ever overcome. If a candidate for the ministry feel that he is not capable of partaking of the sorrows of others, as well as of their joys-if the voice of lamentation does not call up the tenderest sympathies of his heart-if his mind be incapable of abstraction from its own pursuits, to indulge with others in the sacred offices of grief and devotion; let him turn back, and engage in some employment for which nature has fitted him, before he proves to the world his inability to perform the duties of a station, which would be disgraced with anything short of a reasoning head and feeling heart.

It is, then, the duty of the christian minister, to take as his directory the scriptures of the old and new Testaments; to explain their doctrines, and enforce their precepts; to strive diligently to do this in a pleasing manner; and so to order his life, walk, and conversation, as to command the respect, insure

the confidence, and win the affections of mankind. It is his duty to render himself an example of sincerity, sobriety, meekness, and humility; a pattern of good works; a practical illustration of the virtues which he is bound to recommend to others. And we need not, in this stage of the present investigation, enter into any argument to show, that the duties which devolve upon him, are among the most important that were ever enjoined upon man. We need not labor to show, that more depends upon the performance of these duties, than is ordinarily suspended upon the exertions of human beings; or that there is far less to palliate a neglect of them than can, with propriety. be urged in extenuation of the common errors of mankind. Errors of judgment, it is true, may be excused in one case, as well as in the other; but the plea of ignorance comes with a bad grace from those who voluntarily assume the responsibilities of the ministerial office. If ignorant of the duties that appertain to the calling, they ought not to enter upon the undertaking of giving instruction to others; if well informed concerning them, they must expect, if found deficient, to be 'beaten with many stripes.' We cannot give a summary of our views upon this interesting topic in language more appropriate, than that of the apostle. A teacher of others should be 'blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.' Such, in brief, are our views of the important duties of the christian ministry, duties which are alike indispensable to the success of the gospel, and the happiness of mankind.

II. Of Ministerial Qualifications.

Having considered the duties which devolve upon ministers of the gospel, it is now proper to bestow some attention upon the qualifications which are indispensable to the performance of them. And, as some method is desirable, these qualifications will be considered in their relation to the duties before noticed, and in the order in which they stand.

First: It has been shown, that the gospel minister is bound to take the Scriptures as the man of his counsel, reserving to himself the right to read, and understand them, according to the best

light afforded him. And, if he is required to receive them as constituting his rule of faith and practice, it follows, that he will be poorly qualified to know what his duty is, unless he is able to read them understandingly. And here it must be confessed, that the mind is inclined to the conclusion, that a knowledge of the original languages in which the Scriptures first appeared, is indispensable to a thorough understanding of their import. This would be the irresistible conviction of our minds, were it not a well known and generally acknowledged fact, that, by availing ourselves of the labors of critics and learned commentators, we may arrive at a very correct knowledge of the meaning of the Scriptures, without an extensive acquaintance with either the Hebrew or Greek languages. There has been much learned quackery on the one hand, and not a little heedlessness on the other, in relation to this subject. The correct course undoubtedly lies between the two extremes. Some have pretended that no one can possibly be qualified for the ministry, without being thoroughly acquainted with the dead languages; while others have affected to despise the aid of education, and to look upon learning as a human invention, destructive of the spirituality of religion, and a dead weight upon the cause of Christ. We adopt neither of these extravagances. We consider a knowledge of the languages, or indeed a finished education (if there is such a thing to be obtained) as exceedingly desirable, but not as a thing indispensable to a right understanding of the Scriptures. It is desirable to have that knowledge, on several accounts; chiefly because it would enable the biblical student to repair directly to the fountain head, and trace the sacred truths of religion from their source; and because it would, in the course of years, be a saving of time and labor, to be able to do so.' But it is not indispensable to be thus qualified, for the reason before stated; and because, with more industry, and more extensive reading, a competent knowledge of the lively oracles may be obtained. On the score of economy, there would be a saving of time and labor in being able to read the Scriptures in their original languages; but to say, that, because they cannot be thus read and examined, no thorough knowledge of their contents can be obtained, is to say that many volumes have been written to but little purpose. And besides, though a person may become wise concerning what is written, without the aid of a classical education, it is a consideration of considerable weight, that a biblical student acquires a feeling of independence, by being able to read and translate for himself; which must be extremely grateful, and perhaps serviceable in the prosecution of his investigations. So that it is, all things considered, a desirable, though not an indispensable, qualification for the ministry, to be thoroughly conversant with the original languages in which the Scriptures were written. And if anything can add to the interest which those who are ambitious to excel will ever feel in regard to this subject, it is the fact, that many of the expositions and translations, upon which the unlearned minister must necessarily, in some measure, depend. are the productions of interested sectarians; whose chief motive may have been, the aggrandizement of a party, rather than the elucidation of truth. Such and similar considerations, it is hoped, may have their proper influence upon the minds of those who may hereafter take upon themselves the responsibilities of the ministerial office; for though ignorance of the learned languages may not constitute an insuperable disqualification, the want of a good understanding of the Scriptures would be insufferable, in one who should undertake to instruct others.

Secondly: There are two kinds of labor, to which every minister of the gospel must attend; viz. first, to acquire; secondly, to communicate, information. The foregoing remarks apply to the first; and we proceed to consider some qualifications which are indispensable to the acceptable performance of his duty, when attending to the public administration of the word.

It was shown, under the first general division of the subject before us, that it is the duty of the gospel minister, to endeavor, by all practicable measures, to render his manner of communicating instruction interesting and agreeable; and we are now prepared to say, that the ability to do so, is an important, we had almost said an indispensable, qualification. But we confess ourselves unable to do more than give the outlines of a correct manner of speaking, leaving it for the reader to fill up the sketch; and even in doing this, it would be far more convenient to dwell upon the prominent faults of public speaking, than to lay down rules for their avoidance; since it is always easier to discuss subjects with which we are practically familiar, than those with which we are not experimentally acquainted.

If we may be allowed to hazard an opinion, in a case of

some interest to our cotemporaries, we would say, that the prevailing style of pulpit oratory is decidedly bad. And a little reflection will confirm the persuasion, that, generally speaking, performances in the desk, are of a grade far inferior to those of the bar. There are some defects in the popular style of speaking, which we shall attempt to point out, that they may be avoided; and these are, some of them, peculiar to certain denominations, while others are prevalent among all. The general fault with public speakers is, their manner is too artificial—there is too servile an imitation of some model of eloquence; a too nice observance of certain rules; a too strict conformity to system, to prescribed methods; too much attention to attitude and gesture, to render public speaking effective. We give it as the result of some little reflection, that it is much easier to become a kind of speaking automaton, than an interesting and useful preacher; and that no set of rules can be laid down, to which any two persons can conform with the same success. No fact need be plainer, than that the only true principles of eloquence are in nature; yet it is well known, that each of the different denominations has its peculiar fashion of public speaking; as if the bestowment of grace had been accompanied with the right to reduce, to a common level, all the gifts and powers, the emotions and aspirations, of a given number of men. For example: we should not need the spirit of divination, to tell, on listening to the performances, and observing the manners, of several different preachers, whether they had graduated at Cambridge, or Williamstown, or had studied divinity at Andover, or somewhere else. The careful observer would have no difficulty in deciding whether he was listening to a disciple of Calvin, or of Socinius. A solution of the question, if any should arise, would be afforded in the very attitude of the speaker, in his 'down sitting and uprising," in his pronunciation, his action, in everything either in his manner or appearance. It is true that there is, now and then one, who breaks loose from his trammels, and by following the dictates of nature, arrives at some degree of eminence in the profession, by acting himself; but, in a majority of cases, the refinements acquired at colleges and theological seminaries, have reduced public speaking to a grade below mediocrity.

In attempting to specify particular instances of failure in performances of this kind, we may notice, first, faults in the use of language. We allude both to carelessness in the choice of words, and inaccuracies in pronunciation. It would be foreign from our purpose to encourage that unreasonable particularity which oftener offends than pleases the cultivated ear; and equally so, to inculcate that extreme nicety which would be rather a characteristic of the pedant than of the scholar; yet it may be regarded as quite unbecoming in a preacher to be careless in these respects, since he is bound to understand the language in which he clothes his ideas, and should be able to use

words properly, and with good effect.

Another fault which ought to be guarded against, and one which inexperienced preachers are very liable to call by another name, is extravagant gesticulation. Some are exceedingly fond of making a display of this sort; and the same want of taste and good judgment which induces them to adopt a practice so much at variance with the importance of their message to a suffering world, will be sure to make it appear, as it really is, a caricature of propriety; and render it apparent, to the hearer, that the 'art of hiding art' is not among the number of their accomplishments. Were the object worth seeking after. it would be extremely hazardous for any one to aim at operating upon the feelings of an auditory, and thereby gaining popularity. by a resort to any such means; for fame resting upon such a foundation would be but a poor equivalent for the labor it would cost to obtain it; and a failure would end in absolute disgrace. Gesture is justly considered an accomplishment worthy of being sought after; but this differs materially from the fault we are endeavoring to point out. Action or posture, expressive of sentiment, adds much to the force and beauty of delivery; but the antic tricks which some speakers indulge in, for the sake of effect, serve but to disgrace the profession, and render the gesticulator ridiculous. And we are not quite sure, that there is not some danger in paying much attention even to gesture. Every motion of the body should be, or at least should seem to be, produced by the sentiment expressed; and not mechanically adapted to it. And if a man feels what he says, his body will be likely take care of itself, and to perform its part, in communicating to the bosoms of others the emotions which warm and animate his own. And, to save ourselves from the appearance of officiousness, we would, in giving advice to those who desire to become useful public speakers, bring to our aid the language of an eminent, though profane, author. 'Do not saw the air too much with your hand; but use all gently; for

in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Be not too tame neither; but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature.'

Thirdly: We have considered it as among the duties of a minister of the gospel, to observe the rules of propriety and politeness, in his intercourse with mankind; and it is now proper that we bestow some attention upon those accomplishments which shall enable him to do so. Two things would seem to be indispensably necessary, to enable a person to conduct himself with propriety, in the various situations in which he is liable to be placed—viz. first; a desire to please, and to be of service to mankind: secondly; a ready perception of what will be agreeable and serviceable to others: and these will be found to involve another qualification; a knowledge of men and manners.

There is no employment better calculated to excite and cherish the desire to be of service to our fellow creatures, than that of studying and teaching the great truths of christianity. If any thing will sweeten the temper and chasten the human affections, this will assuredly do it. The religion of Christ is a religion of love, gratitude, and good will. It breathes peace and kindness. It seeks to alleviate distress wherever found; and it seeks not in vain; for wherever its influence is felt, its efficacy is known. It pours the oil and wine into every wounded bosom, and feeds, with the milk of human kindness, every hungry soul. And this is not all. It tends to a refinement of manners and morals; and renders it an imperative duty, to do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household What, then, shall be said of one, who professes to teach this religion, in whose conduct are discovered no indications of a desire to oblige, and be of service to his fellow creatures? We must say of him, that his conduct gives the lie to his professions, and proves him unfit for the work in which he is engaged. If true politeness consists, as we think it does, in being at some little pains to accommodate and please those with whom we associate; and if christianity enjoins it upon us to seek to promote the good and happiness of others, it is difficult to conceive of a christian, without associating the idea of an accomplished person, both as respects purity of morals and urbanity of manners. We are impelled to hazard these reflections by the conviction, that the first principles of good breeding have been frequently violated by professed ministers of the gospel, and that, too, with impunity; as if the ordinary rules of propriety were beneath the notice of those whose employment it should be to win souls to Christ, by the persuasives of infinite love, and unmerited grace. We allude to the conduct of those, who, under the pretence of being extremely anxious to save the immortal souls of mankind, are in the habit of entering the dwellings of their neighbors, uninvited, and of obtruding their persons and services upon the sanctuary of domestic retirement; and of dealing out their sanctimonious abuse, or offering their useless and offensive advice and counsel, when no apology can be rendered as an excuse, unless it be, that they are ignorant of what belongs to the gentleman or the christian. We know not that anything can exonorate ministers from the rules of good breeding; and hesitate not to say that any one who does not entertain a desire to please, is poor-

ly qualified to perform the functions of the office.

But it will be difficult for any one to render himself agreeable, however ardently he may desire to do so, unless he perceives with readiness what will be best calculated to please those with whom he associates. If blessed with ordinary sagacity, he will be able to adapt his appearance and conversation, his deportment and lessons of instruction, to the feelings and circumstances of his friends, in whatever condition he may chance to find them. He will have no difficulty in discovering the impropriety of being unreasonably fond of engrossing the whole conversation of the social circle; of delivering lectures upon morals in the parlor of a friend, before a mixed company; of indulging in levity at any time; or in light conversation when in the society of the afflicted—he will be constrained, by a sense of propriety, to avoid disputation, and to be careful never to treat with contempt either the opinions or prejudices of mankind. In a word, he will see the path of duty with distinctness, and walk in it with circumspection. As an indispensable requisite, he must be acquainted with the world, and with the manners of mankind. And that he may obtain this knowledge, he must not only seek the society of his fellow beings, but he must become a careful observer of mankind. He must study the different dispositions to be met with; he must make due allowance for the influence of education, and the force of habit; and, in all his gettings, he must acquire the power of controling his own passions, and be able to over-

come his own local prejudices.

And, in addition to all that has been said on the subject of ministerial qualifications, it must now be observed, that there is one other, without which those that have been enumerated, will be of little or no avail. That one qualification is, a sincere and inextinguishable attachment to the cause of truth, founded upon a devout sense of its unspeakable importance, and an experimental acquaintance with its influence upon the heart, and upon the interests of mankind, united with a sincere regard for the human family. Without this, one can have no just conceptions of the nature of the duties which devolve upon the public servant of Christ; and, consequently, would be poorly prepared to discharge them. And in view of the interest which hangs around this subject, we fear that the limits to which we are confined will not allow of our bestowing that attention up-

on it which its importance demands.

It is apprehended that some have been, and that others may be, induced to enter the ministry without this qualification. It has been thought, and perhaps justly, that the unpopularity of our sentiments would be a sufficient barrier against the evil of having any but those whe were sincerely attached to the cause, offer their services to advance its interests; but even that has not protected us, in all instances. And, now that our views are better understood, and consequently more justly appreciated, and more extensively embraced, it is high time that measures were taken to detect any deficiency of this kind in applicants for fellowship, and thus prevent the evils which would unavoidably arise from allowing them to enter the ministry from unworthy motives. No person, we presume to say, influenced by sordid or pecuniary motives, can justly be considered as entitled to the countenance of the order. If the love of truth is not his chief inducement, he ought not to be encour-For if sinister motives lead him into the profession, the prospect of greater advantage will lead him out of it; and no reliance can be placed upon one, who, for thirty peices of silver, would betray the cause of the Redeemer. The labors of such persons are good for nothing, even when enlisted in a good cause. The world is not so dull of apprehension as not to be able to see through their formalities, and discover their want of this indispensable qualification. And when this want

of principle is detected, it will be despised, and set down to the discredit of the denomination. So that it is for the interest of the cause of truth, that a rigid examination should be made of the motives, views, and feelings of those, who offer

their services as ministers of the everlasting gospel.

It being the grand object of the ministry to make known the principles of the gospel, that mankind may be reconciled to God, and that a change for the better may be brought about in their moral condition; how important is it, that none but those who are influenced by high and holy motives, should be engaged in the work. It being true that our happiness depends upon a willing performance of duty, and that a knowledge of God's revealed character, purposes, moral government, and boundless love, is that which only can reclaim the wicked, or save the virtuous from the moral evils to which they are necessarily exposed; it would seem, that no greater misfortune can befal the human race, than to have interests so important committed to the keeping of unworthy men. And it is submitted for the consideration of those who are now successfully employed in disseminating the truth as we have received it, whether some measures ought not to be devised, whereby the order may be protected from the evils which have been pointed out, and secured the enjoyment of that prosperity which alone can bring about the repose and glory of the church—whether, indeed, the condition of our cause does not demand that qualifications of a higher order should be looked for, in those who apply for the fellowship and countenance of the denomination.

In bringing this article to a close, we would direct the attention of the reader to a few additional facts, relating to the present condition of our ministry. The number now actively engaged in the holy cause of disseminating a knowledge of the grace of God, is not known. It is, however, considering the infancy of the denomination, quite as large as could have been expected. Among us, are converts from almost all other denominations, who have entered the field from conscientious motives, feeling it to be their duty to testify the efficacy of that truth which made them free. We still look for accessions to our numbers from the same sources; for as our doctrine spreads, and becomes known, it will be embraced. And it is expected, that those who thus come over to the help of the Lord against the mighty, will bring with them some peculiarities of sentiment, feeling and manner. As this has been the

case, we may calculate that it will be so in future. Nor would we have it otherwise; until, out of all this variety, material shall be collected for a standard of ministerial talent, which shall have for its base the excellencies of all, without the defects of any. Our ministry, at present, has no distinctive characteristics. We have neither the intrusive and restless forwardness of the Orthodox, nor the effeminate sentimentality of the Unitarians; nor have we any methods peculiar to ourselves. It having been the chief object to expose error, and persuade mankind to embrace the truth, if there be one peculiarity in our general style of speaking, it is an apparent sincerity, united with great earnestness, and resulting in not a little severity, in exposing the faults, and denouncing the errors, of other denominations. We have the material for an eloquent and effective ministry; and it is our distinguished privilege to believe and advocate a sentiment, which is eminently calculated to warm the heart, invigorate the understanding, chasten the affections, tranquilize the mind, and cause the soul to pour out its gratitude in the strains of that eloquence which heaven itself inspires. It becomes us, therefore, to bear it in mind, that our cause has so advanced, that a little too much opposition to the sentiments of others, may, and probably will be, considered as indicative of a disposition to persecute those who have not yet ceased to persecute us; and that it will be a far more noble employment, to defend, with becoming earnestness, the faith once delivered to the saints, and to cultivate those virtues and graces which best adorn our profession. To do this effectually, it will be necessary for each member of our order, to do what he can towards eradicating the errors which may have obtained among us; and for all to endeavor to co-operate in cultivating a correct taste in speaking, a pure and elevated morality, a generous and forbearing disposition, and in fostering a spirit of brotherly love. And in view of the importance of these matters, while we pray most fervently to the Lord of the harvest, to send laborers into the vineyard, we would add the humble request, that they may be such as shall be serviceable, and such as high Heaven may approve. And, fearing that we have already trespassed upon the patience of our readers, too long, we submit the foregoing reflections for their consideration, hoping that by calling attention to this subject, we shall at least elicit thoughts from others which shall be far more useful than our own. L. S. E.

ART. III.

Orthodox Impiety.

We seldom hear profanity, from the lips of the most abandoned, which for impiety will compare with the following, pub-

lished by the American Tract Society.

'A Family at the Bar of God, and in Hell.—Dreadful, awful, soul appalling thought. Who can think, without shrinking, upon the vengeance of a God. The vengeance of God poured commingled upon the heads of wicked parents and ruined children; but most weighty and dreadful upon the heads of the destroyers. On this awful subject we durst scarcely speak. We have no doubt that as there are whole families in heaven together, so there are whole families in hell together. O what an assembly. The mercy of God can never reach them. That tender connexion which constituted so large a portion of their earthly felicity, helps now largely to constitute their eternal misery.

In order to realize, in some measure, the shocking impiety which the foregoing contains, we must duly notice the meaning of certain words and phrases, which are found in it. First: What do the Orthodox mean by the Bar of God? They mean a certain tribunal, before which we are all to appear, not in the present state of our existence, not while we remain in the land of the living; but after we have done with this world, have passed through death, and are raised from the dead. Secondly: What do they mean by the word hell? By this word they mean a state of unspeakable torment, into which all such will be cast, hereafter, who shall be found guilty at that tremendous tribunal, which they call the Bar of God. Thirdly: What do they mean by the commingled vengeance of God? That they have any distinct idea of what they mean by the phrase, 'vengeance of God,' is perhaps, doubtful; but they evidently mean thereby to awaken the fears of people, and to lead them to dread, with anxious horror those means which God will use, in the eternal world, to torment his creatures. They mean the same by the vengeance of God, as they do by the wrath of God. what it is composed of we have never known them to define.

Thus far assisted, we may look at the scene, which the writer meant to present his readers.—A whole family, consisting

of parents and children, are first brought to the Bar of God, there found to be sinners; from thence they are cast down to hell, where they are forever to suffer. Here God's mercy cannot reach them. But though the mercy of God cannot extend to those miserable wretches, yet there is no difficulty in his reaching them with his vengeance. The vengeance of God

can extend where his mercy cannot go!

The most prominent feature, which we have here presented, of the divine Being, is certainly the most horrible, yea the most hateful of which we can possibly conceive. God was the author of this whole family; he was the author of that tender connexion which constituted a large portion of their felicity, in this world, and he was also the author of all their faculties for enjoyment and for suffering; they were at all times entirely dependent on him, and were always at his disposal. It is then, the rational, sensitive production of his own power, on which he pours his commingled vengeance; causing that tender connexion, which rendered this whole family happy in this

world, to enhance their eternal misery.

It is disgusting to contemplate such impiety. We will endeavor to change the scene, by presenting something like it among men. Suppose then, that a tyrant, because a family of his slaves should offend him, in some trifling concern, not in the least injurious to him, should proceed against them with unrelenting vengeance; exerting all the means in his power to torment them, and taking care to render the tender connexion of husband and wife, of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, most powerful engines of torture to the whole family, should so fix their condition of misery that, should he feel any compassion towards those wretches, it would not be in his power to grant them the least relief; would there be anything wanting to render the character of this tyrant completely hateful? This family were all born the subjects of this tyrant; he has had them at all times under his control; they never had it in their power to injure him in the least; and yet he is vindictively disposed to administer on them all the torture they are capable of enduring. In reference to this character two questions arise; first, could a bad man be worse? secondly, could we possibly more defame a good man than to represent him thus?

But we must remember that the character of this tyrant as base as it is, for real badness comes far short of that which Orthodox sentiments attribute to the divine Being. The family

of the slaves did not owe their existence to this tyrant. Nor did he, before they were born, contrive this plan and scheme of their horrible sufferings; nor has he the power to prolong their existence forever in torment. In all these important particulars, and more, the character of the supreme Being, as represented by the passage quoted from the Orthodox tract. infinitely exceed, in evil, the character of the tyrant, above drawn. We know of no way to avoid rendering the divine character thus odious, if we allow the truth of those opinions. which we feel it our duty to oppose. We frankly acknowledge our entire incapacity to understand their sentiments, if they do not represent our Creator as having planned, even before we were brought into existence, this most horrible state of never ending suffering. Even the supporters of these shocking sentiments, will not pretend to deny that the Creator perfectly knew, before we were born, what our final destiny would be. This allowed, it follows, of necessity, that he contrived the whole plot. Even as they tell the story, the very best we can make of it is, that the Creator so contrived his scheme of infinite evil, as to have something in it that he might call transgression, merely for a pretext, for dooming his creatures to such a state of unspeakable wo. He knew exactly how to balance the moral powers so that they might fail to withstand those ten thousand temptations, which he was sufficiently skilful to place in our way. It is said, we know, that he has given us ample warning, and sent his messengers to point out our danger, that we might avoid final condemnation. Yet it is allowed, on all hands, that he has seen fit to place our danger entirely out of our sight. He has set the fatal trap where no mortal eye can see it. And what is not a little strange, all the testimony we have respecting this danger, is the bare word of those who have pecuniary interest in making us believe it; and who are often known, in other concerns, to state, either intentionally, or through mistake, things which are not only destitute of truth, but of baneful consequences. In the case of the wicked tyrant. we were careful to state, that the matter of offence was not the least possible damage to him. This circumstance renders it similar to the case under consideration; for no one will pretend that what is called human disobedience is any damage or even inconvenience to him who gave us existence, and can dispose of us as he pleases.

In view of the loathsome character which those Orthodox

opinions attribute to our heavenly Father, we deem it proper to call on those who believe them, seriously to set themselves to the task of describing a character of a more hateful nature; for if they fail to do this, as we know they must, how can they avoid the conclusion, that the Satan in whom they believe, is in character less odious than their God; or that the latter could contrive a worse mischief than he has, even if he had

the disposition to do it?

Shall we be told that our reasoning sets at nought the Scriptures of divine revelation; and that this doctrine, this darling doctrine of eternal, commingled vengeance is plainly taught in them? We reply: To us it seems incredible, that if the supreme Being were as determined on the everlasting misery of his creatures, as the doctrine we are examining represents him to be, he would make a revelation of such a fact; and make it in such a manner that none could understand it, except those who can so manage the whole concern, as to bring their fellow beings into slavery to themselves. We think, moreover, that it is much more probable, that professed divines should misunderstand the Scriptures, than it is that our Creator should be the unmerciful being which their doctrine and explanation of Scripture make him.

It is no part of our labor to measure or weigh the amount of moral turpitude which attaches to this reprehensible folly, (to give it a moderate appellation) of so egregiously misrepresent-This is not our ing the ever adorable fountain of all goodness. province: nor have we the knowledge of hearts, which is required in order to adjust so weighty a question. However, we may be allowed to make some comparisons, which we think deserve serious attention, and afford what may be regarded as needed admonition. We are informed, by the sacred historian, that when Jesus wrought miracles of mercy, by the power of God, his enemies blasphemed against the holy spirit, by imputing those miracles to the agency of an evil being. Now, if the imputing of good works to an evil agent is blasphemy, of the darkest shade recorded in Scripture, does it not follow that our Orthodox divines have materially improved in this heinous practice; by imputing the very worst deeds, that ever imagination can conceive, to that most holy Being, with whom evil can never dwell? To us it would seem less criminal to impute good actions to an evil being, than to attribute evil actions

to one who is good; though the error might be of equal magnitude.

One admonition more, by comparison. By the prophet Ezekiel, God complained of Jerusalem for sacrificing her sons and daughters unto idols, and informed them that they had exceeded even the sin of Sodom, in so doing. Now, if Jerusalem was more wicked than Sodom, because she offered her sons and daughters to such evil idols, by what shall we measure the sin of making the true God infinitely more evil than any of the idols of the heathen? Let the eye of candor look at and compare these two abominations, and judge which is the worst. First: look at Moloch with all his horrid means of devouring in Tophet, the innocent children, which deluded parents and ungodly priests committed to his fury. Parents, look at this awful sight, and shudder at the vile abomination. Secondly: look now at another scene. Here is the Creator of all things, the Father of our spirits, pouring out his commingled vengeance on whole families in hell; in a place and state where the writhing, groaning victims of wrath must eternally endure torments, which no being but God himself is capable of inflicting! Let honest, sober reason judge, which of these two exhibitions is the most abominable. Let it say which delusion indicates the greatest depravity. Let it pronounce an impartial decision on the following question: If the vile priests of Moloch were more sinful in their sacrifices, than the wicked Sodomites were in their practices; are not those of our times, who represent our heavenly Father infinitely more cruel than any of the idols of the heathen, as much worse than the priests of Moloch as the latter were worse than the Sodomites?

We have already said, that it is not our province to judge of the weight of moral turpitude, which impartial justice must accord to those who thus outrage all that is rational, by these superstitions; we hope the prayer of the blessed Redeemer may be offered for them: 'Father, forgive them; for they know

not what they do.'

Who ever heard the Saviour of mankind, call the attention of his hearers to the contemplation of 'a family at the bar of God,—and in hell?' Who ever heard him, who spake as never man spake, representing his Father pouring out his commingled vengeance in hell on whole families? The common people heard him gladly; and wondered at the gracious words

which proceeded out of his mouth. God be merciful to all our wanderings, and grant that we may know him better and love him more.

H. B.

ART. IV.

Evangelical Conversion.

Under this short title, we mean to comprise repentance, faith, and, in general terms, the entire process by which one becomes a genuine Christian, whether it be called the new birth, regeneration, or by any other name. An extensive subject! and somewhat difficult of exposition; since it is involved in a mass of circumstances numerous and complicate. But to us, nothing in the whole circle of divinity appears more to need a careful and thorough investigation. Besides its intrinsic importance, as lying at the very root of practical as well as of experimental religion, there is a fact, we think, which imperiously calls for an inquiry into its real character: we mean, the fact that it is widely misapprehended by the larger part of christians in our country.

Conversion, if we mistake not, is commonly represented as an operation on the mind, mysterious and indescribable, out of the regular course of nature, and unlike every other mental exercise in the whole range of human experience. It is said to be a change, not merely of our views, purposes, or dispositions, such as takes place in all other cases, but of our very nature. Even the faith which it requires, is thought to be essentially different from ordinary belief; so that a mere conviction, how deep soever it be, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and his doctrine the truth of heaven, is denominated, by way of disparagement, historical or speculative faith, not evangelical. That repentance, too, which forms part of the process in question, is represented as equally peculiar: It is not merely the forsaking of vice, nor the correcting of our moral feelings; it is not the acquiring of pious sentiments in

any natural way, nor the conforming of our tastes, passions and conduct, to the examples and precepts of Christ, by means of our own endeavors and the ordinary blessing of God. All this is stigmatized as selfrighteousness, dead morality, mere human virtue; but genuine conversion is distinguished, it is supposed, by a far more sacred principle of action: a su-

pernatural agency working immediately on the heart.

It has also been thought, that while undergoing this mysterious and miraculous operation, one must pass through an extraordinary experience of melancholy, fear and even despair. He must feel that his nature renders him loathsome in the sight of God. So much is regarded as indispensable. And it is deemed at least desirable, that he should discover that divine justice demands his everlasting damnation; and that he should be seized with apprehensions of being actually consigned to that horrible doom. If he is brought to imagine that there is no possible mercy for him, it is pronounced a favorable symptom; if he fancies that the bottomless pit is about to open at his feet, and that he can almost hear the wailings of the damned, the work is thought to be very powerful and in rapid progress. When he has at length sunk to the lowest depth of despondency, Christ usually puts forth his power, it is supposed, and converts him so instantaneously as well as so perceptibly, that he can fix on the very hour of his change. He suddenly feels a faith, hope, joy and love, of a kind to him entirely new, with which there has been nothing homogeneal in all his past life.

We have thus attempted a sketch of what is now called conversion. The shades and coloring of the scene may indeed vary considerably in different parts of the country, being sometimes deeper and sometimes lighter, than they are here exhibited. But the general features are still the same; and they are of so remarkable a character, as to be easily enough re-

cognized, under all their changes of complexion.

Now, it is apparent from the nature of the case, that there can be no very great difficulty in ascertaining whether the conversion taught in the New Testament was of this peculiar and striking kind; or whether, on the contrary, it was simply a change of belief, feelings and conduct, such as we often experience in other affairs. We say, this question can be determined with the highest degree of moral certainty, by a serious application to the Scriptures; for so largely do they treat on

the subject, under so many various aspects do they introduce it, that it is impossible they should have left it in such confusion that we cannot distinguish which of two so different operations they refer to. If to either, we cannot mistake without a most perverse ingenuity. We may be reminded, perhaps, that eminent critics, who must be supposed to have studied the Bible with care, have yet been unable to agree on the point. We may be told, too, of many dark texts relating to it, which are susceptible of a plausible construction in favor of either side, just as the interpreter is disposed. All this, we grant, is true, if those texts be taken independently of their connexions, and then subjected to the powerful alembic of hypercriticism. We propose a course which is liable to very little danger from this quarter, and which will avoid most of the uncertainty as well as difficulty there encountered; a course suggested by the following considerations:

1. The four Gospels and the book of Acts abound in simple historical accounts of conversions. At the same time that these books are, professedly, memoirs of the public ministry of Christ and his apostles, they are also narratives, more or less particular, of the conviction, repentance and faith of such as were converted by the labors of our Saviour and his inspired followers. Here we find the addresses, both public and private, incidental and formal, by which the change in question was produced. Here we find, in several cases, the process marked out at full length. We see it just as it occured; without the trouble of studying it through the more indistinct medium of

abstract definitions.

2. If these conversions were the same with the modern, such narratives must of course betray the distinguishing and well known characteristics. In that case, we shall generally find, for instance, that the converts felt during the process, a new and peculiar distress of mind; and that it arose from a sense of their corruptness by nature, and of their exposure to everlasting torment. We shall find some traces of their vain endeavors to reconcile themselves to their offended God; and of their giving themselves up at length, in despair, to the immediate and supernatural interference of the Almighty. In the several notices of the means and methods by which their faith was produced, we shall see that it did not stop at mere belief, how strong soever; but that it went on to something far more extraordinary, though not yet intelligibly described. Their

repentance will appear as pointedly distinguished, as it is in modern experiences, both from reformation of the natural kind. and from the renunciation of one religion and the embracing

3. But if, on the contrary, those conversions consisted only in a persuasion of the truth of Christianity, and in a resolution to conform to its precepts, the several accounts will thus exhibit them, without any of the distinguishing characteristics of the other process.

In one word, it is manifest that whatsoever these original narratives show conversion to have been, such it actually was. as matter of fact. It did, in reality, consist of the particulars which we shall find here stated; and it was effected in the manner here described. All the incidental allusions to the operation, scattered through various parts of the Scriptures, ought, in justice, to be understood agreeably with this authoritative standard; just as phraseology, in every other subject, should be interpreted according to the facts to which it belongs, where these are known. We propose, therefore, to lav our present subject before the reader, by means of the history of conversions, as it stands in the New Testament; taking into view, as we proceed, the circumstances, the events, and the preaching or addresses, which co-operated to the result. In order to afford occasional relief, in a long article, we will divide the continuous narrative unto three periods. Beginning with the introduction of the gospel, there are

First: The ministry of John the Baptist, before the public

appearance of Christ:

Second: The personal ministry of Christ; and

Third: The ministry of the apostles subsequently to Christ's

ascension.

These three periods, let it be observed, cover the whole ground, and embrace the entire subject, so far as it regards the matter of historical fact. Having exhibited this, we may afterwards adduce some relative observations from the Epistles. and explain certain forms of expression, which occur in that part of the New Testament.

I. Scriptural Account of the Repentance occasioned by John the Baptist's Ministry, before Christ began to preach.

When John made his public appearance, there was, it is well known, an old and deeply venerated system of religion estab-

lished throughout all Judea, founded partly on the law of Moses, and partly on the traditions of the elders. It was in the full tide of successful operation. Each city, each village, was furnished with its synagogue, where the solemnities of worship were regularly attended, and where the Old Testament was read and expounded 'every sabbath day,' under the superintendence of the doctors of the law, and of other persons appointed and trained to the service. To these officers of religion, the greatest respect was apparently paid, and their instructions were generally deemed sacred. But the duties they enjoined were altogether defective, often frivolous, and sometimes perverse; consisting in sanctimonious gloom, abstinence, ritual observances, and a morose zeal, rather than in virtuous affections and conduct. The circumstance of their being the covenant people of God, as descendants of Abraham, filled their hearts with spiritual pride, and led them to suppose that they were exclusively the favorites of heaven. We must not forget, however, that the community was divided into two general classes, the professedly religious, and the sinners, so called; and that of the former there were different sects, of whom the Pharisees and the Sadducees were the principal.

It was in such a state of society, that the forerunner of Christ began his public ministry. Amid the wilderness of Judea, and throughout the country around Jordan, he declared himself the herald, spoken of in ancient prophecy, who was to 'prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight.' Announcing the near approach of their long expected Messiah, he called on the people 'saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' The consequence was, that 'then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their These were probably the common people, who were not distinguished professors of the popular religion; a class which is generally the first to seek the preachers of a new doctrine. But so great did the public excitement become, that even the Pharisees and Sadducees went forth, at length, to hear And 'when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' that is, from the terrible judgment about to fall on your land;

as, we think, most of the approved commentators, 1 of every creed, apply this expression. 'Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now, also, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire:' signifying, by this figure, that the process was already begun, by which the impenitent devotees of a false and worthless religion should be brought down from their

proud height, and consumed.

But what was the character of the repentance urged upon them? In what did it consist? What were they required to do? Was it, to feel their lost and ruined estate by nature, to despair of working their own reformation, and to throw themselves on the miraculous interposition of heaven? or, was it, on the contrary, to amend their lives, and to do good works? Let the sacred narrative furnish the all important answer. Following the words last quoted, are these: 'And the people asked him. saving, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them. He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none: and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans [a class of men notorious for their frauds in collecting the public taxes, to be baptized, and said unto him, Master. what shall we do? And he said unto them. Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers, [belonging to a standing army, whose peculiar vices have been the same in all ages]—the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, and what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man; neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.' 2 Such was the kind of repentance taught by John the Baptist. Of the Pharisees and Sadducees, it must be remembered, he had before required that they should no

¹ Dr. Lightfoot, (Harmony of the Evangelists, Sect. ix, on Matt. iii, 7,) Dr. Hammond, (Paraphrase and Annot. on the New Test. in eodem loco.) B. p. Pearce, (Commentary on the four evangelists, in loco.) Dr. Gill, (Exposition of the Old and New Test. in loco.) Dr. Campbell, (Four Gospels, Translation and notes, in loco.) and not to mention others, Dr. A. Clarke, (Commentary on the New Test. in loco.) think 'the wrath to come' means here, the judgments about to fall on the Jewish nation. Even Dr. Scott, the prostitute of Orthodoxy, admits that such was its immediate reference, though he asserts it had a further allusion to eternal torment. See his family Bible, on Matt. iii, 8, 12, &c. ² Compare the accounts of John the Baptist's ministry, in Matt. iii, and Luke iii.

longer trust in their relation to Abraham; because, this reliance was, at once, the cause of much of their spiritual pride, and the occasion of their resting satisfied with themselves in their corruptness. Of them and of the indiscriminate multitude at large, he demanded acts of kindness and generosity, one to another. These several distinct classes of people, he separately instructed to avoid those vices to which they were peculiarly accustomed, or by their course of life exposed. here he stopped. Though they, with great ingenuousness, asked his explicit directions, he went no further, not even to an intimation of their ruined state by nature, nor of their inability to reform themselves. This, then, was not the sort of repentance preached at the present day, and arrogantly denominated evangelical; it was what is now called a merely natur-

al and ordinary change.

What, too, were the leading motives, by which this reformation was urged? What reasons were alledged to move the people to the work? No other appears to have been generally employed, than the assurance that the kingdom of heaven, or the expected reign of their Messiah, 1 approached: 'In those days, came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' The dispensation, so long desired, was about to begin; a new system of religion, pure and perfect, was about to descend from heaven to earth, and to supersede the old and corrupt. A general reformation was, of course, necessary, both in the established church, and among the more undisciplined mass of the community, in order to prepare them for the momentous change; just as a thorough reform of our laws, institutions, and of all our political feelings, manners and habits. would be required by a complete revolution of our civil government. Having enjoined this preparation, he proceeded to warn the people of those judgments on the unreformed, that were to be executed under the approaching administration of the mightier than he: 'whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.' 2

¹ See Art. i, in the first vol. of this work-July, 1830.

² I am aware that this expression is often referred to a separation in the future world. But the tenor of the language shows plainly enough, that John alluded to a retribution which should be realized under Christ's ministry, not long after its commencement: 'he that cometh after me, is mightier

And such a result, it is well known, actually followed Christ's

ministry, before the close of that generation.

We have now arrived at the end of the first period mentioned; and have seen what was the character of repentance, and what were the considerations on which it was urged, under the preaching of John the Baptist.

II. History of Conversions during the personal Ministry of Christ.

As the limits of this article do not allow us to quote all the instances recorded of conversion, we shall select those which are the most instructive: those in which the character of the work is clearly pointed out, either by the particularity of the description, or by circumstances connected with them.

1. Immediately, it seems, on his appearance as a public teacher, our Saviour, found two disciples in Simon Peter, and Andrew. St Matthew and St Mark inform us, that 'Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me; and I will make you fishers of men. And straightway, they left their nets, and followed him.' But John mentions a circumstance which occurred probably at an earlier period, and which accounts for the readiness with which Simon and Andrew obeyed. They had been disciples of John the Baptist; and of him they had learned, in the following manner, that Jesus was the Messiah: Andrew and another disciple were standing with John, when their master 'looking on Jesus as he walked, saith, Behold the Lamb of God! [by which title he had before intimated that he meant the Messiah. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ve? They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, come and see. They came, and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was

than I, : . . . whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor,' &c.; that is, he comes with his fan in his hand, prepared for this work; and on his coming, he will immediately set about it. Most commentators apply the passage as above. See note (1) p. 48.

1 Matt. iv, 18-20. Mark i, 16-18.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah; which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone,' or Peter, the Greek word for stone. Thus instructed that Jesus was the Messiah, they afterwards, as St Matthew and St Mark relate, followed him instantly at his bidding. Such is the entire account of their conversion to discipleship. It is plain that their faith was simply belief, on the authority of John the Baptist, and from what they themselves saw, that Jesus was the looked for messenger of God.

2. Two other conversions, of a similar character, are related by St John, in the words immediately succeeding the passage just quoted: 'The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee; and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathaniel, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel saith unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathaniel answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the figtree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.'2 On what ground, let us ask, did Nathaniel believe? On the force of some circumstance relating to Christ's knowing him without an introduction, and assuring him that he saw him under the fig tree; though he may already have been somewhat favorably disposed, by the mere authority of Philip's testimony. Again: what did he believe? That Jesus was the Son of God, the king of Israel: terms then understood to be synonymous with that of Messiah. Such was his faith, and such the way in which it was produced; yet, altogether insufficient as it would now be thought, it seems to have found a welcome acceptance

¹ John i, 36-42, compared with verses 29, 30.
² Ditto, ver. 43-50.

with Christ. And his conversion, though accomplished without even one of the distinguishing characteristics of the modern, was manifestly approved. He was probably present, three days afterwards, when Christ turned water into wine, at the festivities of a marriage in Cana: 'This beginning of miracles,' says the evangelist, 'did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him;' 1 the miracle confirmed their faith, as it naturally would, in the divine

authority of their master.

3. A few days later, he went up to Jerusalem, at the passover, 'and found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting. And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money; and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence! make not my Father's house an house of merchandize.' After this exertion of authority, which must have fixed universal attention, it appears that he wrought miracles there; for we are told that, on this occasion, 'in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.' 2 The wonderful success with which he achieved the reformation of a scandalous abuse, and the following manifestations of a divine power, were, to them, satisfactory proof that he was the messenger of God. No illustration is needed to show what was the nature of a faith produced by such evidence and demonstrations.

4. It seems to have been at this period, that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night; 3 and since the conversation which occurred in that interview, is quoted, more frequently perhaps than any other passage, in countenance of the modern kind of conversion, we will here pause, and consider it. Nicodemus professed his conviction that Jesus was a teacher come from God; and yet, Christ solemnly assured him, at least by implication, it will be urged, that such mere belief was not sufficient qualification for the kingdom of God. He told him still that he must be born again: a phrase, it is asserted which meant nothing less than a change of nature, in the modern acceptation of this term. And this proves, it is contended, that Christ would not accept such faith as was only of a historical

kind; and that he imperiously insisted on a supernatural conversion.

But let us look more carefully at this case. What was apparently the state of mind in which Nicodemus, a patron of the popular religion, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, approached our Saviour? The wonders he had seen, impelled him, indeed, to the conclusion that Jesus was 'a teacher come from God;' but then, he seems to have wanted honesty or fortitude to act according to his conviction, and to declare it before the world. The reason why his faith was not accepted, may be found, not in its historical character, but in the dissimulation of the man. He held the truth in unrighteousness. His unworthy concealment, and the secrecy of his visit at the hour of darkness, were doubtless alluded to, in the severe rebuke with which Jesus closed his address to him: 'Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.' Impressed though he was by the miracles he had witnessed, it is yet probable that his conviction was not very decided; and that he was embarrassed by Christ's lowly condition, so different from that in which the Messiah was expected to appear. Where was his kingdom, so glorious in prophecy? Where, his unrivalled splendor? He saw none. That such difficulties should arise to distract his faith, was perfectly natural from all the prejudices of his education; and that they did actually thus perplex him, may be inferred from the opening of Christ's reply, of which the first words were, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, or kingdom of the Messiah: terms then used as synonymous. 2 A change, both of views and of inclination, was certainly necessary to their discovering that spiritual kingdom which the Jews had wholly mistaken. and which they had longed for, in the supposition only that it was worldly and Pharisaical. It was necessary that they should be born of water and of the spirit: that they should be purified, as with water, from the sordidness of their affections, and be imbued with the spirit, for all their expectations and fond hopes were fleshly. They looked for a pompous prince, and a splendid earthly empire, in which their own kind of religion should be honored beyond all example, and their

¹ Ver. 20, 21. ² See Art. i, in the first vol. of this work—July, 1830.

superior righteousness procure them seats of distinction. No. marvel, therefore, that they 'must be born again;' when, as Christ apprized Nicodemus, 'as Moses lifted up the sement in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' It was a suffering, and finally a crucified Messiah, and not the gorgeous pageant of their imagination, whom they were to receive.

Why it should be thought that the phrase, 'born again,' must of course mean a supernatural change, we cannot conceive, unless it be from the blind influence of long continued habit. Did we interpret it literally, as Nicodemus seemed disposed to do. then we should indeed conclude that it implied a miracle; but when used figuratively, as all believe it is here, what discoverable characteristic has it, to fix its reference to so singular a process as conversion is now represented? There certainly is nothing in the expression itself to denote such a change, rather than any other; and it is plain that the surer way to understand its meaning, is, by recurring to the reality itself, as set forth in the simple historical accounts. To these, we now re-

5. The next conversions mentioned, are very circumstantially related. Not long, probably, after the interview with Nicodemus, Christ returned from Judea towards Galilee. Fatigued with his journey, he stopped to rest at Jacob's well; when a woman from the neighboring city of Samaria, came to draw water. With her he entered into conversation; and having occasion to say, 'Go, call thy husband, and come hither, the woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.' Whereupon, she proposed the noted question in dispute between the Jews and the Samaritans, Which was the proper place of worship, Jerusalem, or Mount Gerizim? Jesus told her that the place was matter of indifference; and that a worship purely spiritual was about to supersede the former and local. Then 'the woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto

¹ John iii, 14, 15.

her, I that speak unto thee, am he. . . . The woman then left her water pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man which told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came unto him.... And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him, for the saying of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they be sought him that he would tarry with them. And he abode there two days. And many more believed, because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.' Let the reader compare these conversions, and the ground on which they were effected, with the description we gave of the modern, in the beginning of this article.

- 6. Pursuing his journey into Galilee, Jesus arrived, at last, in Cana, where he had turned water into wine. Hither a certain nobleman, who had heard of his arrival, came from Capernaum, about twenty miles distant, and requested that he would go and heal his son, then at the point of death. 'Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth. And himself believed, and his whole house.'2
- 7. Soon afterwards, it seems, Christ entered into Capernaum; when a centurion of the place, who was beloved of the Jews, and had built them a synagogue, sent elders, requesting him to come and heal a favorite servant who was ready to die. Then Jesus went with them; and when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authori-

¹ John iv, 3-42. ² Difto, ver. 46-53.

ty, having under me soldiers; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another. Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he docth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about and said unto the people that followed him, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.' What was this so great faith? A full confidence in the divine authority and power of Jesus; but a confidence merely natural, such as he entertained in his own ability to command his soldiers and servants. judged it unnecessary, in order to effect the cure, that Christ should come to his house, it is probable that his faith had been established or confirmed by the miracle lately wrought, in like

circumstances, on his neighbor, the nobleman's son.

8. Let another instance suffice for this part of our narrative. As Jesus passed through Jericho, at a certain time, 'behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was done ciaf among the publicans, and he was rich. And he soought to see lesus. who he was: and could not, for the praess, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he lepoked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make hast e and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. An d when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, that he was gon e to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zaccheus stood and said unto the Lord. Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation. I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.'2 His faith in Jesus, we are here left to infer; but the reformation of a moral kind, which he professed, is particularly stated: he gave half of his goods to the poor, and restored fourfold to all he had wronged. Though he had been reputed a sinner with whom it was scandalous for a religious person to associate, this ordinary kind of amendment of his conduct instantly procured him an assurance, from Christ, that salvation was come to his house. The agreement of this reformation with that taught by John the Baptist, is as striking, as its difference from that required at the present day.

¹ Luke vii, 1-9. I follow the most approved Harmonists in the chronologi-1 arrangement. 2 Luke xix, 1-9. cal arrangement.

Several other accounts of conversion might be adduced from the four evangelists. But a number sufficient has been quoted to show what was their general tenor; and the remaining instances, being of the same character, would prove to be, substantially, but repetitions of what we have already inserted. If the reader has any doubt of our impartiality in the selection, he owes it to himself to pursue the work here begun, and to collect all the notices of this kind, which the Gospels contain. We presume, however, that he will think, with us, that the several cases now produced, determine the subject without appeal, admitting, as we do, that the practice of Christ was consistent with itself.

The conversion, then, which he exacted as the condition of discipleship, consisted simply in a belief that he was the Messiah or Son of God, an honest devotion to his cause, and in a grespoonding course of moral conduct; without even one 2 of the distinguishing operations or incidents of the modern

process

It is time to close this a section, and to proceed to a survey of the next or last period it a sacred history. This is the more requisite, since it may be questioned whether the conversions before the descent of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, were so complete in every respect, and so fully worthy the epithet evangelical, as the ose which occurred afterwards. What, then, was their character after that event, when the Comforter had come, and led the disciples into all truth?

III. History of Conversions under the Ministry of the Apostles, after Christ's Ascension.

Here, we shall be obliged, for want of room, to follow the course pursued in the preceding section, and to confine ourselves to those cases which are the most definitely marked by the sacred historian.

1. The first in order of time, as our readers are aware, is that which occurred on the day of Pentecost; a feast at which the Jews were accustomed to be present, from all parts of the world. On this occasion, the apostles of our Lord were convened in one place, when cloven tongues, as of fire, came, with the sound of a mighty rushing wind from heaven, and sat upon each of them. They were filled with the holy spirit, and spoke in divers tongues. The Jews, hearing of the phenom-

enon, ran together. Among them were devout men1 from every country, who had probably tarried at Jerusalem since the great feast of the passover when Christ was crucified. They were astonished and confounded on hearing the twelve, though Galileans, speak in all the different languages to which themselves were accustomed in the various nations where they were dispersed. But Peter standing up assured them, that the wonderful event was but the fulfilment of a remarkable prophecy of Joel, who had spoken of this time, and who had said that whosoever should then call on the name of the Lord, should be saved. Ye men of Israel, continued Peter, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, as ye yourselves know, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified. But God hath raised him from the dead; as David prophesied, saving, Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. And this which ve now see and hear, he hath shed forth, from his exalted state; having ascended to heaven, as David prophesied in another passage, saying, 'The Lord said unto my lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore, concludes the apostle, 'let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' The multitude, who had been awed by the miracle, were convinced by Peter's reasoning, and by the testimony of the Psalms; and they were struck with horror by the proof which now for the first time reached their minds, that it was their own Messiah whom they had lately crucified. 'Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then said Peter unto them. Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the

¹ These were Jews from foreign countries. Luke calls them (Acts ii, 5,) 'Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven,' and says they 'were dwelling [or, sojourning] at Jerusalem.' They had probably come up to the passover, fifty days before the present feast; since it is evident, from Peter's address, that they had been concerned in crucifying Christ. Devout, or zealous for the law, they would naturally be ready instruments in the hands of the priests and elders.

Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day, there were added unto them about three thousand souls.' Such was the process of their conversion: by Peter's arguments, sanctioned by the wonders they saw and by facts they recollected, they were compelled to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and that God had raised him from the dead. This was their faith. They were pricked in their heart by the reflection that it was he whom they had lately put to death. They sought advice of his apostles. They repented of their conduct. They attached themselves, by baptism, to the church of their crucified Lord. Let it be observed, that all this was accomplished in little more than half a day.

2. Soon afterwards, Peter, in company with John, performed an astonishing miracle at one of the gates of the temple. There sat a beggar, who had been a cripple from his birth. While he asked alms of the two apostles, Peter, fastening his eyes on him, said, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.' The cure was immediate. Wonder and amazement spread through the vast concourse that, as usual, thronged the temple. The people crowded around the apostles; and when Peter saw it, he said, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of our fathers hath glorified his son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied before Pilate, when he was disposed to let him go. Desiring a murderer to be granted unto you, ye killed the prince of life. But God hath raised him from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 'And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him, hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.' I know, continued Peter, that it was through ignorance, ye and your rulers crucified the Christ; but those things which God before had shown by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath thus fulfilled. 'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted; that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.' Having referred to several prophecies

¹ Acts ii, 1-41.

and promises concerning Christ, the apostle concluded his address by assuring them, that God had sent his son Jesus first unto them, to bless them by turning every one of them from their iniquities. Here, the priests, captains of the temple, and Sadducees entered and apprehended the apostles; 'howbeit many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.' We scarcely need say, that the facts they believed, must, from the nature of the case, have been those on which Peter had just insisted: that Jesus was the Messiah, or son of God; and that he had been raised from the dead.

3. The next conversion circumstantially related, is that of the Ethiopian eunuch. Returning from Jerusalem, whither he had been to worship, he read, as he sat in his chariot, the prophet Isaiah. At this instant, the evangelist Philip approached him, 'and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said. How can I, except some man should guide me? and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter: and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And, as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.'-Now, let us attend to the decisive evidence he is about to give of his conversion: 'And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.'3

4. The conversion of Saul, which follows next in order, is generally admitted to have been miraculous, even by those who deny the common doctrine on this subject. But the truth is, the conversion itself does not appear to have been miraculous; the means, or rather the immediate occasion of it, was indeed

Acts iii. Acts iv, 4, compared with chap. iii. Acts viii, 26-38.

so, as were those of several other cases which we have passed under review. Breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Christians, this furious, but honest zealot was on his way to Damascus, when a supernatural light shone around him, and he fell to the earth. Hearing a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? he exclaimed, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord answered, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. This was demonstration, of a miraculous kind, that he who had been crucified, was indeed risen from the dead; and Saul knew, at once, that Jesus was no impostor, as he had hitherto supposed, but the Christ of God. Devoted as he had been in his unbelief, he was now equally devoted in his faith; 'and he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.' Instant in his obedience, he rose, and was led, blind, into Damascus. Here, Ananias, a disciple, met him by the command of Christ; 'and putting his hands upon him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee by the way as thou comest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.' Such was the process of his conversion. 'And straightway, he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the son of God; and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.' 1 Such was the subject on which he dwelt, in the beginning of his ministry.

5. We have said that St Paul's conversion was not, in itself, miraculous, though such was the character of the events by which it was occasioned and attended. It was from another interposition of Providence, remarkable if not miraculous, that the jailor at Philippi appears to have derived his persuasion that Paul and Silas were the chosen servants of heaven, and that of course their doctrine was true. They had preached for several days in his city, where their ministry roused much opposition. The magistrates at length commanded that they should be beaten, and cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely. But at midnight, Paul and Silas sung praises unto God; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, that shook

the foundations of the prison, opened all the doors, and loosed the prisoners. 'And the keeper of the prison, awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway.' Here, as in the former cases, the conversion appears to have been simply to the belief of Christianity.

6. When Paul and Silas departed from Philippi, they went to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. 'And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.' What did they believe? That which the apostle had proved to them out of the Old Testament: that the Christ must have suffered and risen from the dead; and that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ or Messiah.

Here, we drop the narrative. Our readers have now seen, by matters of fact instead of hypothesis, what evangelical conversion was, and what was the character of faith and repentance, under the ministry of the herald, the founder and the inspired teachers of our holy religion. Differing as the genuine reality does from the fantastic corruptions (we cannot call them counterfeits) which are now in so high repute, the sincere christian cannot hesitate, which to receive, and which to reject. Let it be remembered, that all the incidental allusions to the subject scattered through the New Testament, and all the phrases by which it is designated, such as being born again, becoming new creatures, &c., must be understood in agreement with the

standard exhibited in the actual occurrences. To so great a length have we already drawn this article, that we have not room here to enter, as we proposed, into a more particular explanation of those terms; but should it appear desirable, we may attempt the work at some future opportunity.

H. B. 2d.

ART. V.

Critical Remarks on Heb. ix, 27.

'And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' Heb. ix, 27.

The views we entertain of this passage, we are sensible, are widely different from those entertained by christian divines generally. They have applied these words of St Paul, to the support of their doctrine of a general judgment after men are dead; at which trial, the endless condition of every individual of the human family will be decided, and fixed, according to the characters they may have formed in this mortal state. Few passages are more used for this purpose, and none relied on,

as proof of this doctrine, with more confidence.

We deem it judicious, and a practice which tends to the increase of useful knowledge, to lay before the public our views concerning religious subjects, wherein we differ from opinions commonly believed. By thus calling the attention of the religious community to the consideration of what we may think are improvements, we may contribute our mite for the benefit of others, if what we think are valuable discoveries are really such; but if on due examination they are found to be erroneous, we shall be likely to be corrected by some friend to truth, who may feel it a duty, as well as a satisfaction, to guide such as are out of the way, into the paths of understanding.

The better to understand the meaning of the apostle's words, under consideration, it is necessary, in the first place, to obtain a clear understanding of the general subject on which he was treating, and respecting which these words were written.

By just casting an observing eye over several chapters preceding the one in which our text is found, together with this and the following chapter, the reader is made acquainted with the fact that the writer was endeavoring to make use of the Levitical priesthood to bring to the understanding of his Hebrew brethren, who were well acquainted with the rituals of the first covenant, the priesthood of Jesus, as accomplishing

all that which was but represented by that of Aaron.

With these things in the mind, the reader will notice the following description of the tabernacle under the laws: chap. ix, 1, &c: 'Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second vail, the tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all Now, when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the high priest alone every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not vet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was vet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience... But Christ being come, an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and a more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens, should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ hath not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these sacrifices, which they offered, year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect.' Though the foregoing quotation is quite long, we have omitted much which the apostle justly thought was necessary to make his subject sufficiently clear to the understanding of his readers; and we would recommend to ours to examine carefully several chapters in this connexion, by which, undoubtedly, they will be fully convinced that the writer was endeavoring, by the priesthood of the law to lead to an understanding of the priesthood of Christ. With this subject clearly understood, the reader will at once see the propriety of explaining these words, 'and as it is appointed unto men once to die,' to mean, as it is appointed unto the men who are high priests, to die once a year, by proxy, in their sacrifices; and these words, 'and after this the judgment,' to mean, after the high priest died in his sacrifice, he entered into the most holy place, bearing the judgment of the people, or the justification of the

That the entering of the high priest into the most holy place, was for the justification of the house of Israel, we learn from the directions which were given to Moses, which we find recorded, Exod. xxviii. According to these directions, it is understood that the high priest always carried the name of the twelve tribes, on his breast and on his shoulders, into the holy place, when he entered there. On his breastplate were twelve manner of precious stones, on which were engraven the names of the twelve tribes; also on each shoulder he wore an onix stone, on which were engraven six of those names: so that the two contained the whole. See verses 12 and 19: 'And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel. Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord on his two shoulders for a memorial.—And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.' Moreover, in order to show that all the people were considered holy and accepted before the Lord, when thus carried into the most holy place, by their high priest, it was ordered as follows: (verses 36-38) And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the fore front of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts: and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.' It appears to be evident, from these scriptures, that the judgment which immediately followed the figurative death of the high priests in their sacrifices, was the justification of the whole house of Israel, before the Lord, in the most holy place. With this truth in the mind, the reader will understand, how very appropriate the words of the anostle are which follow those we have just explained. See verse 28: 'So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.' Pass now into chap. x, and notice particularly verses 1, 9, 10: 'For the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.' Agreeably with what is so clearly set forth in these passages, the same author says, Rom. iv, 25, speaking of Christ, Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.'

Should the reader doubt respecting the meaning which we have given to the word judgment, in the passage under consideration, and feel inclined to the opinion that this word must necessarily mean a trial, he is requested to consider whether this could be its meaning as used in Exod. xxviii, 29, 30, to which we have before referred. Thus reads the passage: 'And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breast plate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breast plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim: and they shall be upon Aaron's heart

when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.' Aaron's breast plate is here twice called the breast plate of judgment. It is moreover said that Aaron should bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart, when he went into the holy place, to appear before the Lord. What was here prefigured, was fulfilled in Christ, as we read Heb. ix, 11, 12, to which we have before referred. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.' This eternal redemption, which Christ obtained for mankind, answers to that judgment which was borne by the high priest in the holy place, for the children of Israel, before the Lord. And as the high priest appeared before the Lord for the whole house of Israel, so the apostle says of Christ, see verse 24, which also has been before noticed: 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' For what purpose does Christ appear in the presence of God for us? Answer: 'He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.'

Among other significations of the word xpious, rendered judgment, in the passage we are considering, Parkhurst gives the terms judgment and justice, and refers to Matt. xxiii, 23, 'Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith;' and this, he compares with Matt. xii, 20: 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax, shall he not quench, till he send

forth judgment unto victory.'

We presume that no judicious critic would venture, for the sake of supporting the common opinion of a day of general judgment after men are dead, for the purpose of fixing their endless destiny according to characters formed in this mortal life, to apply the word judgment in either of the two last passages quoted to such a day of trial. The last mentioned passage unquestionably refers to the gospel dispensation, by which the salvation of mankind is effected. This will appear to be evident by reference to the corresponding passage in Isaiah, chap. xlii,

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1-4: 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the gentiles. He shall not cry. nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.' If in room of the word judgment, which is used three times in the above quotation, we should use the word righteousness, meaning that righteousness in which the gentiles are accepted of God, we think no injustice would be done to the meaning of the prophet And that the reader may be fully satisfied as to our views here expressed, we here quote verses 6, 7, and 8 of the above named chapter in Isaiah, and compare with them St Paul's words to the Romans. 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from their prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord; that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.' Compare Rom. xv, 15, 16. 'Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, that I should be .the minister of Jesus Christ to the gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.'

If the believer in the common doctrine of a judgment after men are dead should insist, that the words 'as it is appointed unto men to die,' necessarily apply to all men, and that to apply them to men that were high priests, in their official capacities only, is unwarranted, he is reminded, that his views of a judgment hereafter find no better support from the text by such an application. There cannot be a reasonable doubt that the apostle intended to make use of the ritual priesthood to represent that of Christ; nor will any Christian pretend that justification was not the result of both. With the light of these truths in the mind, let us apply the words, 'as it is appointed unto men once to die,' so as to mean that all men are appointed to die the natural death of the body; and then carefully consider what must necessarily follow. 'And as it is appointed unto men once to die,

but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.' Compare Rom. iv, 25: 'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' Again, chap. v, 18: 'Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment come upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' Also 1 Cor. xv, 21, 22: 'For since, by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' According to these scriptures we are assured that for all men there is in Christ, who was dead and is alive, who gave himself a ransom for all men, salvation, justification and life. This salvation, this justification, this life, which all men have in Christ, is undoubtedly what Paul meant by the xpidis, which followed the death of which he spake, when he said, 'as it is appointed unto men once to die.'

The candid believer in the common doctrine of a general judgment, in which all men are to be judged according to their characters formed in this mortal life, and according to which they will be rewarded or punished forever after, will acknowledge that the general theme of the apostle's argument, in his epistle to the Hebrews, to which we have attended, does, by no means, favor such a doctrine. He will therefore acknowledge, that unless that doctrine is more clearly set forth and established by other portions of the divine word, it would be extremely hazardous either to apply this passage in Heb. ix, to it. or to rest it on that testimony. But in what part of the Scriptures can be found the common doctrine of a general judgment more clearly set forth than in this passage? There is no text, that we know of, on which more reliance has been placed for the support of that doctrine; and we presume that no one text has been quoted more often for such a purpose.

There are two important subjects, yea three, which we seriously recommend to the sober attention of those, who having been educated in the common doctrine of a general judgment, feel confident that the Scriptures do, somewhere, clearly express it. First: When searching the Scriptures to find the passage wanted for the above mentioned purpose, let due caution be exercised to ascertain if the subject of discourse, into which

the passage is introduced by the writer, have any relation to such a trial in a future state of man's existence. Let the question always be present to the mind, whether if the passage sought for should be found, and if other passages should also be found to support the same doctrine, and the subject should thus be put to rest, this doctrine of judging and recompensing men in the future, eternal world, according to their works in this life, does not stand in direct and open opposition to all the gospel testimony which goes to show that salvation by Jesus is not according to the works of righteousness which we have done; but according to God's own purpose and grace. which were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. And thirdly: let the query, whether any recompense, either of happiness or misery, if it be strictly endless, can reasonably be said to be according to the momentary works of men in this brief state of mortal existence.

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ART. VI.

Commentators on the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. —Matt. xii, 31, 32.

This text is commonly regarded as positive proof of everlasting exclusion from heaven. That it is so considered, we have, of course, no complaint to make; but there is a little disingenuousness, with which we may justly find fault, in the manner in which this alleged proof is often imposed on us. It is not unfrequently adduced, even by preachers and writers of extensive theological reading, as a testimony so plain of eternal perdition, that none but a hardened Universalist would deny its relevancy. Now, the truth is, many of the most approved commentators, those recommended as standard critics by our Orthodox brethren themselves, discover no proof of endless torment, in this passage; though they, at the same time, assent to the doctrine on other grounds. Believing that their explanations will be interesting to our readers, not only on this account, but also for the instruction they contain, we subjoin a few of them.

BISHOP PEARCE, of the Church of England, the intimate friend of Sir Isaac Newton, and one of the first scholars of his age, gives the following explanation of this passage: 'Neither in this world nor in the world to come:-rather, neither in this age nor in the age to come; i. e. neither in this age when the law of Moses subsists, nor in that also when the kingdom of heaven, which is at hand, shall succeed to it. This is a strong way of expressing how difficult a thing it was for such a sinner to obtain pardon.' He annexes to this comment the following long note: 'The word αιών, seems to signify age here as it often does in the New Testament, (see chap. xiii. 40, and xxiv. 3, Coloss. i. 26, and Ephe. iii. 5, 21,) and according to its most proper signification. If this be so, then this age means the Jewish one, the age while their law subsisted and was in force; and the age to come (see Heb. vi. 5, and Ephe. ii. 7,) means that under the Christian dispensation. Under the Jewish law, there was no forgiveness for wilful and presumptuous sins: concerning them it is said in Numb. xv. 30, 31, the soul which doeth aught presumptuously, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandments. See to the same purpose, Numb. xxxv. 31, and Lev. xx. 10, and 1 Sam. ii. 25. With regard to the seculum futurum, the age to come, or the Christian dispensation, no forgiveness could be expected for such sinners as these Pharisees were; because, when they blasphemed the holy spirit of God, by which Jesus wrought his miracles, they rejected the only means of forgiveness, which was the merit of his death applied to men by faith, and which under Christianity as the only sacrifice which could atone for such a sin: in this sense (as things then stood with them) their sin was an unpardonable one. But, then, it is not to be concluded from thence, that, if they repented of this blasphemy, they could not obtain forgiveness. The observation of Athanasius (vol. i. p. 237, ed. Col.) is very material. 'Christ does not say, To him that blasphemeth and repenteth; but, To him that blasphemeth; and therefore he means, to him that continueth in his blasphemy; for with God there is no sin that is unpardonable.' And the truth of this observation will ap-

pear from the following instances: Jesus said, in Matt. x. 33 whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father; where the threatening is as strong as this in the case of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost: and vet, when Peter shortly afterwards denied Jesus before men three times, joining other curses with his denials, yet upon his repenting and weeping bitterly, he was not only forgiven, but continued in his apostleship. Again, when Jesus was on the cross, some of the rulers denied him, saying, he saved others; let him save himself. if he be Christ the chosen of God. (Luke xxiii. 35.) By which word it appears that they acknowledged Jesus to have wrought miracles, and yet rejected him, denying that he wrought them by the Holy Spirit of God: and yet Jesus prayed to his Father that they might be forgiven. (Luke xxiii. 34.) To this may be added, that in this chapter, verses 38, 39, 40, these Pharisees who had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost, asked for a sign, and our Saviour gave one to them, viz. the sign of the prophet Jonas: and what could this sign be given for, unless for their conviction, and for disposing them to repent, and in consequence of this, to be forgiven? From all which it may, I think, be concluded, that to speak against the Holy Ghost. as those Pharisees did, was not therefore to be forgiven in that age, or in the age to come, because no means of obtaining forgiveness for it was to be found either in the Jewish law, or under the Christian dispensation; but that, however, upon their repentance, they might be forgiven and admitted to the divine favor.' Commentary on the Four Gospels, in loco.

DR. HAMMOND, another divine of the English Church, and one of the best reputed of the old commentators, thus paraphrases the text: 'For this speech of yours, (that I work by Beelzebub) let me tell you, Pharisees, (v. 24.) that this malicious resisting and holding out against the invisible work of God, and despising the miracles that I have wrought by the spirit and power of God, (v. 28,) is such a crime, of so deep a dye, that it shall to them that continue in it, be irremissible. Whosoever shall say this against the Son of man, that is, shall not receive me as I am, the Son of man, or before I am sufficiently manifested by the spirit or finger of God to be the Messias, he may by want of light or manifestation be excusable, and by a general repentance of all his sins of ignorance, may receive pardon. he that shall resist the spirit of God, manifestly shining in these miracles wrought by Christ, to the astonishment and conviction of all but Pharisees, (v. 23,) and shall impute those miracles to the devil, which by what hath been said sufficiently appear to be the works of God's own power, if he repent not particularly of this, and come in and acknowledge Christ, thus revealed and manifested to him, there is no pardon or mercy to be had for him, neither in this age, nor at the coming of the Messias (by them supposed yet future); or, neither in this life where he shall be punished with spiritual death, God's withdrawing of grace, nor in the other where eternal death expects him.' Commentary on the New Test. Paraphrase in loco.

The Dr. also translates the phrase 'neither in this world nor in the world to come,' as follows, 'neither in this age, nor in that to come.' He likewise adds a long note to prove the propriety of the foregoing paraphrase, and to show that according to the tenor of the whole New Testament there is no sin whatever that may not be repented of, and then forgiven.

See his note. (k.)

- 3. The celebrated Dr. Campelle here translates the phrase this world and the world to come, by the terms this state and the future; and says, in a note on the passage, that it is uncertain whether by these two states are here meant the Jewish dispensation and the Christian, or the present life and the life to come. Four Gospels. Translation and Note in loco.
- 4. GILPIN, an English divine, whose work is well approved, expresses his view of this passage in the following paraphrase: 'Since therefore the divine authority by which I act is so fully apparent, he who through malice ascribes these works to the devil, can have no stronger means of conviction. He cannot be more hardened; and therefore this is the most difficult of all sins to be washed away by repentance and pardon.'. Then he adds this note, 'Nobody can suppose, considering the whole tenor of Christianity, that there can be any sin, which on repentance may not be forgiven. This therefore seems only a strong way of expressing the difficulty of such repentance, and the impossibility of forgiveness without it. Such an expression occurs, Matt. xix. 24:—It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven: that is, it is very difficult. That the Pharisees [who committed the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost] were not beyond the reach of forgiveness on their repentance, seems to be plain from verse 41, where the repentance of the men of Nineveh is held out to them for an example.'—Exposition of New Test. in loco.

To the same effect, Rosenmuller, Kuinoel and Dr. A. Clarke explain the passage.

H. B. 2d.

ART. VII.

Modifications of the popular Doctrine of Endless Misery.

The design of this article being somewhat novel, we would have the reader clearly apprized of the course we intend to pursue. Our immediate aim is not to confute the doctrine of endless misery; but to point out the inconsistency of certain modifications it appears to be undergoing. Some of our speculative divines, unwilling to dispense with so imposing a tenet, and feeling, nevertheless, unprepared to maintain it in all its native barbarity, have hoped to accommodate it, in a degree, to the dictates of reason and humanity. But while attempting this, they seem wholly to forget the ground on which they rest the very doctrine itself. With an oversight, remarkable, but not uncommon with ingenious speculatists, they, in the first place, advance the general hypothesis on certain alleged proofs: and then they proceed to modify it, till they remove it entirely from the reach of those proofs, even were the original appositeness admitted: thus leaving the structure, much improved perhaps, but deprived of its foundation. The exposure of this fact. if made with sufficient plainness, will lead the advocates of the doctrine to see that they must either bring it back to its proper though horrible character, or abandon it altogether. In such an alternative, we doubt not that many of them will choose the latter course; and when the case becomes generally understood, we believe that the tide of improvement, which is already felt, will be directed more fully to the abolition of the obnoxious dogma, instead of being diverted in vain attempts for its amendment.

The sole ground on which endless misery is believed and urged, as an article of the Christian religion, is, if we mistake not, the supposed fact that the Scriptures teach it; or, at least, that they explicitly mention a punishment in eternity, without warranting the hope of its termination. It is on the Bible, we are told, that the doctrine rests. And if, for the purpose of reducing the question into a definite compass, we ask, on what part of the Bible? a multitude of noted and oft repeated texts is brought forward. As it is important to mark the character of the testimony on which so much depends, we shall do well

to insert it at some length. It consists of such passages as the

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m following}:$

'As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' 1 ' We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.' 2 'We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'3 the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.' 4 'I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.' 5 'After thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds.' 6 'Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.... Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.'7 'Said one unto him, Lord, are there few And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at that be saved? the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house

¹ Heb. ix, 27.
2 Rom. xiv, 10—12.
2 Cor. v, 10.
5 Matt. xii, 36, 37.
Rom. ii, 5, 6.
Prov. i,

hath risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ve begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saving, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.' 1 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.'2 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest, day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.'3

These and all similar texts relate directly, it is affirmed, to the future world; and on their authority, when so applied, is the notion of endless misery maintained. Take these away, and it would no longer exist, as a part of the Christian faith. It might, indeed, be still cherished, possibly, and offered as a mere philosophical conjecture, like the theory of Burnet concerning the earth's creation and changes, or that of Darwin concerning the origin of the moon and planets; but it would cease from our pulpits, our creeds, and our courses of religious instruction, and retire to the closet of the student, and the brain

of the speculatist.

Now, it is manifest that a doctrine which claims to be founded immediately on these texts, must, in order to preserve any consistency, be carefully modified according to the tenor of their testimony. If they teach the fact, they just as authoritatively teach the mode. And indeed we find that the notion of endless misery, such as it is in the common vulgar acceptation, is, for the most part, well enough conformed to the language of these passages, admitting that they refer at all to the subject. After death, or at the end of time, there is to be a general judg-

¹ Luke xiii, 23-27. ² 2 Thess. i, 7-9. ³ Rev. xiv, 10, 11.

ment; when all nations, all mankind, are to stand before the tribunal of Christ, and be judged and sentenced with regard exclusively to the characters formed, and the deeds done, while in the body. Those who shall be found to have led lives of wickedness, or to have died without saving repentance, will be consigned to eternal torment for the sins they committed in this world. Though the intenseness of their sufferings will vary according to the magnitude and number of their past transgressions, yet the very smallest degree will be unspeakable and unconceivable, such as almighty wrath alone can inflict. will the miserable wretches seek to return to God; but no place for repentance will be granted. Then shall they cry aloud for mercy; but they have entered a world of retribution, not of trial; their day of grace is past; and Jehovah mocks at their pain. They have incurred an infinite debt of vengeance; eternity itself is but sufficient to punish the irremissible guilt.

Such is a faithful though rather moderate statement of the popular doctrine of endless misery. And it is apparent, at first glance, that its several particulars have a general correspondence with the respective representations in those scriptures which are relied on for its support, and which, for the sake of the argument, we must now take it for granted, relate to eternity. Let the reader look back, and consult them again, and he will see that they assert the alleged process of a general judgment, the retrospective reference of the decision and of the succeeding punishment, and the terible vehemence of the torment, together with the implacable character of the wrath of Heaven. This, then, is the proper, genuine state of the doctrine. So it has been taught, urged, and declaimed upon, for ages; and so it is held, at the present day, by the common mass of its believers.

But in this state, it is so manifestly the doctrine of infinite cruelty, that many of its staunch advocates themselves quail before its diabolical aspect. They cannot shut their eyes to the immeasurable disproportion between eternal, almighty torture, and the sins of frail mortals in this momentary life; and if they attempt to cover the injustice of such an infliction, under the plea of divine sovereignty, conscience has something to say of the base and damning malignity of a spirit that perpetuates its revenge on a helpless dependant. In such a dilemma, it has been felt, that there remained but one way to rescue the favor-

ite hypothesis from certain condemnation: and that was, by amending it, by prudently sacrificing a part to preserve the general whole, and by shifting it from its native principles to oth-

ers less shocking to our common sense of propriety.

Accordingly, when pressed upon this point, its defenders now tell us that men will indeed be punished eternally; not however, for the sins of this life; for that, it is acknowledged, seems unreasonable; but for sins which the victims will persevere in committing, through the boundless ages of the future world. And since it is right, and even inevitable, that they should suffer so long as they continue transgressors, divine justice is, on this principle, fully vindicated in its everlasting retributions. ¹

1 The American Tract Society, the best authority, perhaps, for the present fashion of Orthodoxy in our country, have resorted to this principle. In answer to the objection, that endless sufferings, inflicted as a punishment for sin are unjust, they demand, 'Can you see any injustice in God's leaving creatures, who have voluntarily rebelled against him, to continue in sin forever; and if they continue to sin forever, may not God justly punish them forever?' To this appeal they subjoin the following note: 'Sinners will deserve to be punished as long as they continue to sin. If they sin during the whole of life, they will be exposed to sufferings during life: if for a thousand years after death, they will deserve to suffer during that time; if eternally, their punishment will have no end. To disprove the justice of future endless punishment, then, it must be shown, either that sinners will cease to sin, or that God is under obligation to reclaim to obedience beings who are voluntarily engaged in rebellion against him.' (Tract, No. 224, pp. 44. 45.) Before taking leave of the last sentence in this extract, we must, in justice, commend to competent casuists the question, how much stronger is the moral obligation to torture a sinner, than to reclaim him, when both courses are equally practicable?

Dr. Lyman Beecher, a gentleman of some influence among the Orthodox of New England, is reported to have used the following language, in defending the justice of endless misery: 'Again, we are not punished forever, for the sins of this short life. This is a mistake. Man is a free agent; and free agency extends through eternity. If there is such a thing as free agency, it may exist beyond the grave. The Universalists admit that sin is punished here, if not hereafter. The law, and the subjects of the law, must, in either case, be alike. For if sin exists, it must be punished while it exists; and if it exist forever, the punishment must be endless. The punishment of the eternal state treads upon the heels of eternal transgression. If the soul rebel in its future state it will be punished 'where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched,'—because sin is its fuel. The doctrine of the Bible is, 'If ye do not repent, ye shall all likewise perish:' if ye do not repent in this life, ye shall never repent. The Bible says not a word about punishing men forever for the evils of this life. Suppose a being to continue in sin,—when he dies, is he fit for heaven? And as he is a free agent, does he not deserve a punishment which never ends?'(Report of Dr. B's Sermon against Universalism, delivered at Dorchester, March 7th, 1830. Boston. pp. 8, 9.)

President Dwight, whose character and attainments give his opinions much weight with the divines of his school, has taken the same ground in

This, indeed, seems a very happy improvement. Who, now, can question the justice of the act, terrible though it is? But it must not be overlooked, that here the doctrine is removed entirely from its old hereditary ground, where it has hitherto been so hotly defended. That famous position, the infinite demerit of sin, which was long maintained by the incessant repetition of one solitary scholastic argument, is abandoned; and endless punishment is now to be inflicted only for continued, endless transgression. What have we to say against the hypothesis,

when thus explained?

Nothing,—except that it ought to have, at least, some degree of affinity with the proofs claimed for its support, instead of being directly repugnant to them. What are they? Why, that the Scriptures assure us, (so it is alleged,) that hereafter, in the final judgment, Christ will consign those on his left hand, to everlasting fire, to everlasting punishment; not because of the sins they may still continue to commit, but for the reason, expressly stated, that they had heretofore, or while in this world, neglected to administer unto him: 'depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; &c. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.' Accordingly, we are told, it is as plain as language can make it, that they will be punished eternally; not for the sins of this life, it is added, but for those of the future. Let the reader mark this contradiction. Another proof, said to be equally decisive, is, that when the rich man lifted up his eyes in the torments of hell, and begged of his father Abraham a little respite, he was irrevocably denied, with this answer: Son, remember that thou, in thy life time, receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now, he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, between

combating the objection, that God cannot justly punish the sins of finite creatures, with infinite or endless punishment. God may justly punish sin,' says he, 'so long as it exists; and it may exist forever. He who sins through this life, may evidently sin through another such period, and another, and another, without end. That while we continue to sin, God may justly punish us, if he can justly punish us at all, is equally evident. Such is the principle on which he defended the justice of endless punishment. It may be well to observe, that the American Tract Society, by adopting this plea, have made it their own. (Tract, No. 181, p. 7.)

us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.' 1 On the strength of this favorite text, we are sometimes threatened with damnation ourselves, if we do not acknowledge that in eternity an impassable barrier will separate mankind, and that the prayers of the sufferers for release or mitigation, will be inexorably refused; not. however, on account of their previous condition in their lifetime. but for the characters which they shall then continue to sustain. Our brethren should be a little more consistent, when they back their arguments with such menaces. They likewise support the general doctrine in question, on the remark of St Paul, that 'we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' Here, it is said, a future judgment is asserted, that is to be followed by punishment for the bad, as well as reward for the good; but, then the punishment will be inflicted for 'the things done in'eternity, instead of-in 'the body.' In this way we might proceed, pointing out the same direct contradiction between other alleged proofs and the hypothesis itself which is rested upon them.

It will be pleaded, perhaps, that we seem disposed to take an undue advantage of this oversight; because we have kept out of view the fact that there are texts also of another kind, which are used as evidence of endless misery: texts, that threaten punishment, without pronouncing whether it be for past or perpetuated sin. St Paul says, for example, that they who know not God, nor obey the gospel, 'shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' As we are not, in this instance, expressly told that it is on account of former instead of continued disobedience, that the destruction is to be everlasting, we are fortunately left at liberty, it may be contended, to form such an opinion, here, as we please, on the point in question; so that the advocates of the doctrine may safely repose it, even in its modified state, on this passage and on others that happen to

be equally indefinite.

Very well. Then they will, of course, discharge from their service all those texts which, on the other hand, are definite in

this respect, and which they have hitherto claimed with so much assurance, not to say superciliousness. Nor must they stop here. They must join with Universalists, and against all their former explanations, criticisms, denunciations, and even anathemas, they must proceed to show that the parable of the sheep and goats, that of the rich man and Lazarus, the declaration of the apostle that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body, and all other passages of this class, have no relation whatever to punishment in eternity; for it is manifest that if such be their reference, that punishment is to be inflicted for sins committed here, not hereafter. What way will they turn? Will they at once relinquish all these passages, which have, in fact, been regarded as their leading proofs? If so, they should be aware that when they have referred these, the most terrible of the threatenings to the judgments of time, they will never be able to show that the remainder of the catalogue may not as properly be explained in the same manner; so that they will thus abandon the very last defences of their doctrine. Or will they return to their old position, and facing down all reason and justice, maintain, as formerly, that the infinite amount of eternal torture is but an adequate retribution for the sins of this short life? We discover no intermediate course.

Thus far we have dwelt on the absurdity of this modification when compared with the texts adduced as proofs. Now we are to see that it is altogether incongruous with other important particulars in the scheme; and that so long as this improvement, so called, is retained, the general system must be inconsistent with itself. Its advocates make great account of a general judgment at the close of time and opening of eternity; when all mankind, from Adam to the latest generation, shall stand at the bar of God, to undergo the scrutiny of omniscience, and to receive pardon or final doom. Final doom for what? Not for sins yet future, we suppose; not for transgressions never as yet perpetrated. And still we are told that the punishment awarded in that doom is to be for continued and eternal sin, not for that which shall have transpired in the present life. Here is no little confusion, which we should be glad to see cleared up by the theological ingenuity of our age. On the old ground, the great day of future judgment was appointed for the purpose of determining the characters and deserts which

mankind should already have acquired, and of pronouncing sentence accordingly; but what is its use or object, on the new plan, we neither perceive, nor imagine that the divines, who take upon themselves the regulation of such mysteries, have yet resolved. Let them be reminded, that in repairing an old garment with pieces from a new, there is danger that the parts will not agree, and that the rent will be made worse.

There is another and more thorough modification of the doctrine of endless wo, which obtains among certain Liberal and Rational christians. Future punishment they see clearly taught in that class of texts from which we have quoted; and they discover no evidence entirely satisfactory that it will not be eternal. At the same time, however, they abhor the diabolical cruelty of the old doctrine, and the unreasonable severity retained even in the latest orthodox improvements. They are pleased to say, not only that mankind will be punished hereafter merely for the continued transgressions of eternity, but also that the punishment itself will be nothing more than the guilt which sinners now feel in their iniquity. The future state, they conceive, is to be but a continuation of the present, so that the wicked will enter upon it with the very same characters and feelings with which they pass from this world. If they afterwards reform, their guilt will grow proportionately less; if they sink deeper in sin, it will increase. But in either case, it will be about the same, both in kind and degree, with that which the like imperfection or wickedness produces here.

Now, if endless punishment must be taught at every expense whatsoever, this, we confess, is as mild and liberal a construction of the doctrine, as can well be devised. But still the question recurs, On what is all this hypothesis founded? On the sacred testimony, that some 'shall depart into everlasting fire,' and be 'tormented in this flame,' where 'shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;' that they 'shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;' and be tormented with fire and brimstone,' so that 'the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever,' &c. &c. Does this language mean nothing but a sensation of guilt; and that, too, only in the ordinary degree? If so, it was absurd to represent the sufferers as departing into it, or, indeed, to denounce it upon them as something then future; for the truth was, they were already in it,—as properly so before, as

after, they died. Turn to the several passages, read them with their respective contexts, and it will be manifest that they announce some extraordinary and signal inflictions of punishment, to whatever state of existence they refer. If to this world, they signify some uncommon and terrible events, some condign, external retributions of a just providence; if to the future, they teach, not properly speaking a state of guilt, but rather an open and formal visitation of judgment in that world, dreadful beyond all that sinners had experienced previously, or, in the present. In this case, christians are precluded, by the authority of revelation, from representing the punishment of eternity either as a continuation of our present accusing conscience, or as a recompense for sins to be committed hereafter. The same alternative that was before presented, still remains: either to release all those texts from the cause of endless damnation, or else to restore the doctrine to its native ground of pure vindictive torture and undissembled cruelty.

Is there no eye-salve for the learned criticism of our age, that will give it a reach of vision to take in the contexts and manifest circumstances of these noted passages? With all its array of Greek, Hebrew and cognate languages, at least characters, must it always continue to peer into the depths of its philological excavations, and never raise its ken to survey the fields it has mined instead of cultivating? Let but the scholar trace the original, and the unlearned the translation, with a broad view to the general current of the discourse, rather than to minute and insulated particulars, and they will readily discover that the texts in question have no reference to the subject to which they have been so long applied.

H. B. ²⁴

ART. VIII.

Omniscience of God. .

I. In speaking of the knowledge of God, it is customary to say, with regard to past events, he knew or foresaw them; and with regard to future events, he foreknows, or foresees them.

Strictly speaking, such language is improper. As there can be no succession of time with the eternal God, there can be no past, nor future in his sight; but all is present. The declaration of James is strictly philosophical:—'Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.' All his works, whether to our view they appear past, present, or future, are known, or are present in the sight of Him who knows all things.

But in discussing this subject, it may be more convenient, and perhaps it may render our remarks more perspicuous, to adopt the common usage, rather than to conform every expres-

sion to the rigid rules of philosophical precision.

II. The fact that God knows all things, or that he foresees all future events, is so generally admitted, that we need not go into the evidence by which it is supported. We only re-

mark,

First, If God possess not such knowledge, he must have made a very rash experiment in creating mankind; giving them a capacity to enjoy happiness, and to endure pain; and making happiness the consequence of certain actions, and pain, of certain others. For aught he could know to the contrary, each soul he should create, would pursue the way of transgression,—endure endless misery,—and thus suffer an infinite evil in consequence of its existence. Such a hazard must have been incurred, unless he knew the end from the beginning.

Secondly, Every prophecy, contained in the Scriptures, implies the fact that the knowledge of God extends to future events. Otherwise he could not inspire his prophets to fore-tell such events. To deny that God possesses such knowledge, therefore, would directly tend to the destruction of our faith in prophecy, a disbelief in revelation, and a rejection of

Christianity, if not to all the horrors of Atheism.

III. We shall now trace some of the consequences, which result from the fact that God knows all things. First: Whatever events God saw, or knew, from the beginning, must infallibly be accomplished; because no certain knowledge concerning the event could exist, unless the event itself was certain. For example,—God informed Moses, that Pharaoh would refuse to let the Israelites depart from Egypt. How could he know this event, or foretell it, unless it was certain of accomplishment? If there were any contingency, any possible

chance for failure, for aught he could know to the contrary, Pharaoh would readily consent to the departure of the Israelites; and thus his declaration to Moses would prove false.

The same remarks are applicable to every instance of prophecy. Unless the event was certain, it could not be known with certainty. The prophecy might prove true, or it might not, just as the case should happen. The whole spirit of prophecy would thus, in fact, be no more than a spirit of calculation concerning the *probability* of future events. This would be the highest degree of certainty attending prophecy, or the knowledge of God, if the event foreseen and foretold were not certain of accomplishment.

But let the subject be viewed in another light. We have said, it is improper, strictly speaking, to say that God foreknows any event. In his sight is no future, no past. With one comprehensive glance, he views all things 'from everlasting to everlasting.' We should say, 'he knows events, which in our view, are future:' for they are present in his sight. He 'calleth

those things which be not, as though they were.'1

Hence the supposition that events, which he knows, are not infallibly certain, implies the absurdity, that he knows that which is not true, and sees that which does not exist: for although he clearly sees and knows these events, yet they may never be accomplished. With much more propriety might we say, we are not certain it is light, when we see the sun shining gloriously at noon-day. If we pretend to have certain knowledge of the existence of such things as we see with our eyes, when awake,—with what show of propriety can we deny the certainty of those events which God sees, and which, in his sight, are already accomplished?

IV. Another consequence, resulting from the fact that God is omniscient, is this: God chooses the existence of all those circumstances, or events which he saw from the beginning. It cannot be imagined that he was under any necessity to give existence to mankind. He is God, and beside him there is none else. So far as we have any knowledge of his nature, from his works, or from his word, we must consider him an independent Being, self-determined, and self-controlled; acting from the impulse of his own nature; and in no degree

¹ Rom. iv, 17.

influenced by any other being, or by any external circumstances whatsoever.

Let it be observed, then, that when the first man received existence from his Creator, and indeed, before God 'breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." all the consequences of that act were fully seen and known. God was not then making an experiment, to ascertain what effect might be produced by giving existence to mankind; he was not making experiment to ascertain whether men would obey, or disobey, whether they would be holy, or sinful, whether they would be happy, or miserable through life, whether they would dwell forever with him in heaven, or whether he would find it necessary to cast out all, or a part of them, from his presence, and make them endlessly miserable. There was no uncertainty in the Divine Mind; but all the circumstances of the existence of men,-all their virtues and vices, all their obedience and disobedience, all their happiness and misery, in time and in eternity, were fully and distinctly known. therefore gave existence to mankind, with a perfect knowledge of all the consequences which would result.

Under these circumstances, God would not have given life to men, unless he chose the existence of all those consequences, which he saw would result from the bestowment of this gift. He saw them all. He knew they would exist, if men were created. He was under no necessity to create men. Yet he did create them, and, of course, voluntarily. This he would not have done, unless he chose that all the consequences resulting from this act, should exist, rather than that they should not exist. To suppose the contrary, is to suppose that God voluntarily performed an act, which he knew would result in a state of things displeasing to himself, and which he chose should not exist. It is to suppose that the infinitely wise God put into operation a system of causes and effects, which he knew would produce consequences contrary to his own desires, and introduce confusion into the universe; when, at the same time, he had abundant power to preserve harmony in his kingdom, and prevent the existence of anything which might give offence.

V. There is yet another consequence, resulting from the

fact that God is omniscient, which is worthy to be noticed. As God is infinitely holy, he cannot choose the endless continuance of sin; as he is infinitely just, he cannot choose the endless violation of his just laws; as he is infinitely merciful and benevolent, he cannot choose the endless misery of any of his children. If, then, he saw that all, or any, of these consequences would result from the act of creating mankind, he would not have performed that act. Since he did perform it, we are authorized to conclude that he knew these consequences, so displeasing in his sight, and so contrary to his nature, would not result from his act. Let this be more particularly examined.

First, as God is infinitely holy, he cannot choose the endless continuance of sin. Holiness and sin are opposite in their nature. We cannot, therefore, suppose that God, who is infinitely holy, is pleased with sin, in itself considered. He may permit, and even choose its existence, for a season, to produce some effect, which could not otherwise be so fully accomplished. According to our present constitution, we cannot adequately realize the value of any blessing, except by comparing it with its opposite. We must have been in darkness, to know the full value of light; we must have been hungry, to know the value of food; and thirsty, to know the value of drink; we must have endured pain, to know the value of happiness. do not say that God could not have created us under different circumstances; but it is certain that these circumstances do attend our present existence. May we not then justly conclude that God permits and chooses that we should be sinful for a season, that we may more fully know the value of holiness, and that we should suffer pain for our sins, that we may more fully know the value of that happiness, which perfect holiness produces? Thus we read: The creature, (or rather, the creation, h refigs) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature (creation) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'1

In this view of the case, having regard to the final deliverance from sin and corruption, the temporary existence of sin is consistent with the holy nature and desires of God, because it produces good in the end. Hence he subjected us to vanity.

¹ Rom. viii, 20, 21.

But we can conceive of no principle on which the endless continuance of sin can be consistent with the nature of God, or which would cause him to desire it to be perpetual; and as God could not desire its perpetuity, he would not voluntarily put in operation a system of causes and effects, which he knew would result in endless sin. But when it has accomplished the object originally designed, it will cease. Thus the creature shall be delivered from sin, and be made free with the right-eousness of the children of God.

If it be objected, that since God is unchangeable, if he voluntarily permit sin now, he will to all eternity, we reply: Because God for a season voluntarily permits, or chooses a given state of things, it does not follow that he will never change that state. Men are now mortal. God not only permits this state of things, but he made them mortal. Yet he has assured us that 'this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saving that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.'1 If this be consistent with his immutability, so also is it consistent that the creature, which he subjected to vanity, should be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and that sin should endure for a time, and afterward be swallowed up in holiness. The change from sinfulness to holiness, is surely no greater than that from mortality to immortality. In both cases, the two are exactly opposite. And if an unchangeable God may effect a change in the one case, he may in the other.

Secondly, as God is infinitely just, he cannot choose the endless violation of his just laws. For reasons similar to those already mentioned, he may permit, or choose, their violation, for a time. But we know of no principle on which the supposition that he chooses their endless violation, can be justified. He would not have ordained those laws, unless they were founded on the principles of justice. As he is just, he must desire the complete triumph of justice over all opposition. This cannot be accomplished, until all his subjects shall yield obedience to his just laws. True, justice has already triumphed in his sight; for he clearly sees the final consummation of all things. But in human view, 'the end is not yet.'

Desiring the unbounded prevalence of justice, he would not have given existence to men, unless he saw it should triumph.

As he has given existence, with a perfect knowledge of all the consequences, this fact alone is sufficient to convince us that all the requirements of justice shall be satisfied, and all

men obey the just law of God.

Thirdly, as God is infinitely merciful and benevolent, he cannot choose the endless misery of any of his offspring. He may, for good reasons, permit the temporary existence of misery. But the perpetual misery of his children is abborrent to the benevolence of a good Father. As God is a good Father, we see not how the endless misery of his children can be consistent with his feelings and desires. But he knew all his works from the beginning. And if any are to be miserable without end, in consequence of their existence, he very well knew it before he gave them life. Unless he chose that they should endure this misery, he would not have given existence under such circumstances as he knew would produce it; for he was under no necessity to create.

But it is inconsistent with his benevolent nature and his revealed word, that he should desire such misery. 'He will have all men to be saved.' This at least expresses his desire for the salvation of all. With all this benevolence, he created men, which he would not have done had he foreseen their endless misery. From this act alone, therefore, if we had no other evidence, we are justified in concluding that he saw the end of all misery, and the enjoyment of universal and unending happiness. On no other principle can the act of creation be

reconciled with the mercy and benevolence of God.

Such are some of the consequences resulting from the fact that God is omniscient, that he knows all things from the beginning. And such is some of the evidence afforded by this fact, that holiness and justice and happiness, shall, in the final consummation of all things, abundantly and gloriously triumph over sin and injustice and misery. 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.'

L. R. P.

ART. IX.

Prophetic and Historical View of the Condition of the Christian Church, before and after the destruction of Jerusalem:

From the Death of Christ, to the End of the First
Century.

In executing the design of this piece, we will first present to view some of those prophecies of our Lord, which seem to relate to the then future condition of his church before the destruction of Jerusalem, and to its different condition after that event, at least to the end of the then present generation. are many passages in the New Testament, in which the teachings of our Lord are recorded, or repeated and urged by his apostles, of which we can make no sense by any just rule of scripture interpretation, unless we may apply them to this subject, as signifying that the church should be in a persecuted state before the destruction of the Jews, and in a state of peace and prosperity for a time after that event. And if we shall find the facts attested by authentic history, which these teachings of Christ, with this their legitimate application, appear to express, we shall feel that every friend to the christian religion will have occasion to rejoice in this confirmation of the divinity of the Christian Scriptures.

This subject seems to be the burden of the discourse of our Lord, which was delivered to his disciples on the mount of Olives, and which is recorded in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew, the 13th of Mark, and the 21st of Luke. The disciples showed Jesus the buildings of the temple at Jerusalem,—and he assured them that these magnificent piles should be entirely demolished. They asked him when these things should be; and what sign there would be when all these things shall come to pass, or when he should come to execute these things, and accomplish the end of that dido, or Jewish age. There does not appear to be any allusion in these inquiries of the disciples, to any events but such as were connected with that dido; nor did Jesus in his answer stray into any foreign subject or foreign world. Then said he unto them, nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great earthquakes

¹ Mark xiii, 4. Luke xxi, 7. ² Matt. xxiv, 3.

shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these things they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.' This was a prophetic declaration to the disciples, that, previous to the destruction of the Jewish polity, they, the disciples, would suffer grievous persecutions. But Jesus further assured them that God's providence should guard and protect his church through all these fiery trials. This assurance he gave them in the following proverbial form of speech: 'But there shall not an hair of your head perish.' He then predicted for his church a deliverance from their persecutions, and a succeeding season of peace and rest, to follow the destruction of the great city, and the overthrow of the nation of the Jews. 'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them which are in the country enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Thus did Jesus encourage his church to expect a speedy redemption, when they should see these things begin to come to pass. And he stated expressly, that the then present generation should not pass away till all these things were fulfilled. What was the redemption here promised the church? The connexion of the discourse requires us to understand it as being a deliverance from those persecutions which they should

have been suffering according to their Lord's premonitions as quoted above: or as Bishop Newcome expresses it, their redemption from the persecutions of the Jews, and the calamities of war.

What is called in Luke the redemption of Christ's disciples. is in Matthew expressed by the gathering them together from the four winds. 'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' 2 Whatever means were employed in the providence of God for the security and preservation of the church at that time of unheard of tribulation on the earth, they were guardian messengers of God to fulfil his will in their promised protection and peace. And this same display of divine power in that generation, executing the long threatened punishment on the enemies of the gospel, and giving protection and succeeding prosperity to the christian church and christian cause, seems likewise to be expressed by the coming of the kingdom of God with power: Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words,' said Jesus, 'in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.'3 And the same is recorded by another Evangelist as the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom: 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.' 4 And by both, the same exercise of divine power is called the coming of the Son of man in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

But to return to the discourse of Christ on the mount of Olives. What Mark and Luke have recorded of this discourse, no commentator of note, of any sect of christians, applies to any other than the event which took place at the end of the Jewish age, and during the generation in which Christ was on

¹ Newcome's Obs. p. 276. 2 Matt. xxiv, 31. 3 Mark viii, 38, and ix, 1. 4 Matt. xvi, 27, 28.

earth. But Matthew has recorded three parables as the concluding part of this discourse, which are omitted by the other two, and are comprised in the 25th chapter of his gospel. These have been applied, by many learned divines, to the resurrection state, as teaching a judgment and retribution there, according to the works of men on earth. But by what authority these parables have been so applied we are unable to learn. They contain no evidence in themselves that they introduce any new subject. They appear to be designed as a further illustration of the subject of the former part of the discourse; and this is plainly the reason why Mark and Luke omitted to record them. If these parables had introduced a new subject, and one of infinitely greater importance, these other Evangelists, as faithful registers, would not have omitted to record them.

But it appears to be not so. The first parable commences thus: 'Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, five wise and five foolish.' None will contend that the kingdom of heaven here means the immortal state of glory. That is not half foolish. All; we think, will agree that it meant the visible church; and that this parable teaches that the faithful should enter into a more complete rest, and the unfaithful be punished, at the time referred to. It is only on the time referred to, then, that christians differ. And this is determined by the context. All the events of which Jesus had been speaking, he said should be in that generation. And here it is said, 'Then (at the same time) shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins.' He had been teaching that the unbelieving Jews should then suffer great tribulation; and he here taught that the hypocrites in his church should suffer the same at the same time.

The next parable, that of the talent, assigns no different time for the fulfilment of what it represents, nor does it connect itself with any different event. It must of course be understood as a further illustration of the dealings of God, and the justice of his dealings with the people of that age. And the last paragraph in this discourse of Christ, which perhaps had better be called a figurative description than a parable, commences with saying, 'when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations.' Jesus does not here inform us that he speaks of another coming of his, of which he had not spoken before. He had before, as we have seen in this same discourse, spoken of his coming

in power and great glory, with his angels, and had stated when it should be. And here he does but describe with more particularity, some of the events of his coming, which he had just

confined to that generation.

As this paragraph must, by every just rule of scripture interpretation, be applied to events of that generation, it follows that the entrance into everlasting life here promised the faithful, signifies their preservation from the evils of that judgment, their succeeding season of rest, and their more abundant entrance into the enjoyment of the gospel of everlasting life. And the everlasting punishment here threatened the wicked, was the tribulation on the enemies of Christ, which Jeremiah had called an everlasting reproach and perpetual shame; and the pouring out of wrath upon the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, which should burn and should not be quenched.2 The saving that before him should be gathered all nations, is no objection to the application of this scripture to those events of time, for the gathering of the nations, and assembling of the kingdoms, are forms of speech frequently used in the Old Testament scriptures, in relation to judgments which should have a widely prevailing effect among the nations of the earth.3

Another prophetic view of the emancipation of the disciples of Jesus from external troubles and persecutions, and their entrance into an enlarged enjoyment of gospel life, when condign punishment should be executed on their foes, is given in the fifth chapter of John's gospel. 'Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' Coming forth to condemnation is something very different from what we find in any scripture, which can be determined, for certainty, to relate to the literal resurrection of the human dead; and so does the coming forth to life as a reward for doing good. Hence we are led to inquire—did Jesus in this case speak of a literal resurrection from the state of death? The inquiry meets with a direct answer in the negative, from the passage itself with its connexions. It does not speak of a coming forth from άδης, the state of literal death, but from μνημεια, the tombs. The resurrection

Jer. xxiii, 40.
 Ib. vii, 20.
 Zeph. iii, 8. Joel iii, 9—16.
 Micah iv, 11. Zech. xiv, 1—3.

to immortality is called in the scriptures a deliverance from ädns, but never is it spoken of as a resurrection from μνημεία. The song which shall be sung in the resurrection morn, is, 'O hades, (state of death) where is thy victory?' Again, the connexion of this passage is against its application to the coming forth of the human dead to immortality. Jesus was speaking of the works of his authority and power, which had begun to take place, and should soon be witnessed in succeeding 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.' That this coming forth from the tombs signifies the change of conditions which should take place both with the christians and their enemies, in that generation, appears evident, from the phrase is coming, which implies that the event was near at hand, and from the circumstance that this was to be a display of Christ's authority to execute judgment. And from the scriptures which we have already considered, we discover that the most signal display of Christ's authority to execute judgment was to be witnessed in the events of the judgment of that generation. And further, the similarity of language has led all commentators to regard this passage in the fifth of John, and the second verse of the twelfth of Daniel, as parallel passages. The words referred to in Daniel are, ' and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' This, Daniel said, should be fulfilled when there should be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. And Jesus, in his discourse on the mount of Olives, spoke of that same time of trouble, referred expressly to this chapter in the prophet Daniel, and limited the fulfilment of the whole to that generation. 1

But we cannot better express what we think to be the plainest sense of the passage quoted from John, than in the following words of *Newcome Cappe*, whose belief in the popular doc-

¹ Matt. xxiv.

trine of a future judgment, would have prevented his applying this as primarily relating to events in time, were it not that the force of abundant evidence convinced him that such application was the true one. '(V. 25.) Verily I say unto you, the period is approaching, and is not far off, when, after my exaltation, they who are now insensible and inattentive to the teachings, and warnings, and ministry of the Son of man, of me, in my present humble circumstances, will hear my voice, when being constituted the Son of God, I shall speak from heaven, by the Holy Spirit, sent to my apostles; and they that hear shall live. (26.) For as the Father hath life in himself, hath the power of giving life to the dead, so hath he given to the Son the like power; he will enable him by means of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the witnesses of his resurrection, to quicken, to give apprehension, sensibility, and discernment, to many who seem now to have them not, who are figuratively and spiritually dead: he will enable him to endue the converts to his gospel with the gifts of the Spirit, and thus to raise them from the dead, to impart to them new principles of life; and besides this, he will enable them to preserve their natural lives in the approaching desolations of their country: thus will the Father honor him whom ye calumniate and reject. (27.) Nevertheless it is not for such gracious purposes alone that I am ordained unto a kingdom; though I am a Son of man, low as I now am, and undistinguished from among the common of mankind, I am appointed also to judge, and to execute judgment upon this untoward generation. (28, 29.) Let not what I say amaze you, suffer not yourselves to be lost in faithless hesitating and unprofitable wonder; believe me, for it is true, not only that the hour is very near at hand, when some who are now perfectly inattentive, and insensible to my call, shall hear the voice in which I will address them, from my approaching state of exaltation, and being obedient thereto, shall live; but it is alike true, that though farther off, yet the time is at no great distance, within the compass of this present generation, when all that now are in the graves, who at present sit in darkness and the shadow of death, the whole body of the Jewish people, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, summoning them to judgment; and being then at length all awakened to perceive who and what he is, shall come forth out of their present state of darkness and ignorance, to a new state of mind, to a resurrection, which to those who have been obedient to the calls of providence, shall issue in the preservation of their lives, amidst the calamities which shall overwhelm their country; to those who have refused to hearken to them, shall issue in their condemnation, to fall among them that fall, and to take their share in all the bitterness of the calamities which are hastening to in-

volve this country.'1

There are many other passages in the New Testament, prophetic of the same season of persecution to the christian church before the destruction of the Jews, and of the destruction of these their persecutors, and their succeeding season of peace and rest; but having already extended the first division of this article to a greater length than was intended, we will not multiply quotations of this description.

II. We will now give a brief historical view of the condition of the christians between the death of Christ, and the destruction of Jerusalem, with particular reference to their persecutions. We find but little history of this period, except what is collected from the book of Acts, and the Epistles of the apostles. From these sources we learn, that, though the word of God mightily grew, and converts to the cause of Christ were extensively multiplied in all parts of the world, yet they were made to suffer many and grievous persecutions. And the persecutions of this time were mostly from the hands of the Jews. and from others through their instigation.

Stephen, one of the ministers of Christ, was stoned to death by the Jews, because of the plainness of his preaching of truth. Saul was then consenting to his death. 'And at that time, there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.'2 Saul continued breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, until, by a wonderful interposition of Providence, he was convinced of his error, and converted to the cause he had endeavored to destroy.3 He was made a minister and an apostle, and shared with others in that sort of opposition which he in his unbelief had practised.

But the persecutions of the church were not confined to Judea and Jerusalem. Although we remarked that most of the persecutions suffered by the christians in the period we are

¹ Cappe's Works, vol. i, pp. 322-325. Acts vli, 59; viii, 1. 3 Acts ix.

treating of, were from the hands of the Jews, and by their instigation, yet this cause of trouble extended over nearly all the then known world. Mosheim says, that, 'so exceedingly great was the fecundity of the Jewish people, that occasionally multitudes of them had been constrained to emigrate from their native country; and at the time of Christ's birth, the descendants of Abraham were to be met with in every part of the known world. In all the provinces of the Roman empire, in particular, they were to be found in great numbers.'1 is no less true that all over the world, the christians found in this people a zealous and troublesome enemy. As Mosheim justly remarks, 'the Jews out of Palestine, in the Roman provinces, did not yield to those in Jerusalem, in point of cruelty, to the innocent disciple of Christ. We learn from the history of the Acts of the apostles, and other records of unquestionable authority, that they spared no labor, but zealously seized on every occasion, for stimulating the magistrates against the christians, and setting on the multitude to demand their destruction.'2

In Philippi, Paul and Silas were thrown into prison by Gentiles, without any instigation from Jews, because they converted a damsel, who had brought her masters much gain by her sooth saying.3 After this they went to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. And there, as they labored in word and doctrine, the Jews, who believed not, stirred up certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and set the whole city in a violent uproar. Paul and Silas fled for their lives, and went to Berea, which when the Jews of Thessalonica heard, they sent on and raised persecution there. When they had fled from that place, and had gone through Athens to Corinth, Paul wrote a letter to the Thessalonians, in which he made mention of his sufferings when he was with them,4 and from which it appears that they too, were suffering much cruel opposition.5 And about one year later, he sent his second letter to the Thessalonians, from which we learn that they were still suffering sore affliction through the instrumentality of the Jews. 'We ourselves,' said he, 'glory in you, in the churches of God, for your, patience and faith, in all your persecutions, and tribulations, that ye endure; which is a manifest token of the righteous

¹ Mosheim's Com. vol. i, p. 105.

³ Acts xvi, 23.

⁴ 1 Thess. iii, 4.

Mosh. Eccl. Hist. vol. i, p. 69.
 1 Thess. ii, 14.

judgment of God, that we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye also suffer.'1 This amounts to a historical record of what Christ had spoken in prophecies, which we have before quoted. He had told the disciples that they must suffer persecutions, and that these sufferings of theirs should be signs of the coming of that judgment which should deliver them from their afflictions, and execute vengeance on their persecutors. 'It shall turn to you for a testimony,' he said, 'in your patience possess your souls.'2 And here, Paul commends the christians for their patience under the persecution they were suffering, and encourages them to regard it as a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God. And concerning this righteous judgment he goes on to speak: 'Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you: and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.'

Thus Paul records the fulfilment of that part of Christ's prophecies, which related to the persecution of his saints, and encourages his brethren to reckon this a sign or token of the fulfilment of those other prophecies, which relate to the coming of Christ, in his glory, with the angels of his power, which he had confined to that generation; and at the time of which, he would recompense deliverance and rest to his persecuted disciples, and vengeance to their persecutors. This letter of Paul was written about fourteen years before the final over-

throw of the Jewish Church and state.

The book of Acts carries on a sketch of the history of St Paul's travels seven years further, to the year sixty three. From this we learn that persecution against the church continued. About a year later, the year sixty four, the christians in Rome, suffered great distresses by the order of Nero, the Roman emperor. This was the first persecution against christians, which the Roman government ever authorized. They had often found protection from the rage of the Jews, by appeal to the ruling authorities of Rome. This, however, was not designed by Nero as a persecution against the christian

cause; it was rather an expedient of his to divert suspicion from his own crime. He had set fire to the city of Rome to enjoy the amusement of seeing it burning. To divert suspicion from himself, he charged the crime on the sect called christians, thinking, no doubt, that by accusing a class of people held in so ill repute, he should be most likely to be believed. But it is probable that their own watchful religious enemies took advantage from this circumstance to molest them. Ecclesiastical historians derive their accounts of this persecution from the heathen writers, Tacitus, Seneca, and Juvenal.

About this time, the long predicted evils began to be poured out upon the devoted heads of the Jews, and in the year seventy, they were brought to that utter desolation which had been so minutely predicted by Christ and other inspired servants of God. And as we have seen that the Jews were settled in all parts of the world, so this vengeance reached them wherever they were. They were trampled under foot of all nations. They were deprived of all privilege of worship in their temple, which was called the presence of the Lord, where he would display to them the glory of his power. Hence it took place as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: They were punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. And as the Lord said by the prophet Jeremiah, 'Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.'1

III. We will now, in the third place, attend to the history of the christian Church, from the destruction of Jerusalem, to the end of the first century. Does this furnish us with any matter of fact attestation to the truth of the scripture prophecies, that the saints of Christ should be preserved through those tribulations, which should destroy their oppressors, and should then experience a season of rest, and an enlarged enjoyment of the aionion life of gospel faith? The history of the christian Church, for this period is very incomplete, but it furnishes sufficient to answer the above inquiry.

The believing or Christian Jews, were preserved through the destruction which came on their country. 'It was under

¹ Jer, xxiii, 39, 40. °

the government of St Simeon,' says Tillemont, 'that the (christian) Jews left Jerusalem by God's order, before that city was beseiged in the year 70, and withdrew beyond Jordan into the city of Pella,' 1. And their lives were not preserved unto continued persecutions and tribulations, but unto that season of rest and peace, which the prophecies had promised. For Tillemont adds, that, 'after the destruction of Jerusalem, the christians returned thither, and appeared with reputation by reason of a great number of prodigies and miracles, so that the church of Jesus Christ flourished again there, being composed of a great number of Jews, who had embraced the faith, and thus continued until the city was destroyed again in the last years of Adrian.' The last years of Adrian were about A. D. 139, which makes the time when the Jewish christians had the peaceful occupancy of Judea and Jerusalem, after the dispersion of their nation, to be more than 60 years.

law of Moses with the christian religion, remained in solitude in Pella about 60 years, enjoying the comfort of visiting the Holy City, which they yet loved and revered. They were vastly out-numbered by the christians from Gentile nations, who rejected the Mosaic ceremonies. But under the reign of Hadrian the desperate fanaticism of the Jews filled up the measure of their calamities, and the Romans exercised the rights of victory with unusual rigor. A new city was founded on mount Sion, privileged as a colony; and the Jewish christians, or Nazarenes, by giving up their Jewish habits, enjoyed a free admission into the colony of Hadrian.' Of course there was then no opposition to christians only as they were confounded with Jews. In reference to this historial fact, Jortin, in his Re-

Gibbon says, that 'The Jewish christians, who united the

to their own country, after the destruction of Jerusalem.' The historical researches of *Milner* have led him to the statement of the same fact. He says that 'the congregation of christian Jews were commanded, by an oracle, revealed to the best approved among them, that before the wars began,

marks on Ecclesiastical History, on the words of Christ, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,' says, This was literally fulfilled, when the believing Jews returned.

¹ Till. Eccl. Mem. vol. ii, p. 145,—referring to Eusebius, lib. de Demonstratione Evangelica: Paris, 1627, 3 c. 5. p. 124.

² Gibbon's Rome, vol. ii, chap. 15, p. 66.

³ Jert. Rem. on Eccl. Hist: vol. i, p. 72.

they should depart from the city, and inhabit a village beyond Jordan, called Pella. Thither they retired, and were saved from the destruction, which soon after overwhelmed their countrymen: and in so retiring, they at once observed the precept, and fulfilled the well known prophecy of their Saviour. The death of Nero, and the destruction of Jerusalem, would naturally occasion some respite to them from their sufferings; and we hear no more of their persecuted state till the reign of Domitian, the last of the Flavian family, who succeeded to the empire in the year 81. He does not appear to have raged against the christians, till the latter end of his reign.'1

But concerning the christian Church in general, there is no account of any persecution against it, after the destruction of Jerusalem, until that of Domitian, A. D. 95. Fleury, who seems to be particular to mention all the *troubles* of the church, even those which *tradition* reported, makes mention of none before this; and this he represents as short, and not violent. On this persecution he says 'the emperor Domitian persecuted the christians at the latter end of his reign. The apostle St John being at Rome, was put into a copper of boiling oil, near the Pontus Latinus; but he suffered no harm thereby. He was afterwards sent into the Isle of Patmos.'2 And speak-

¹ Miln. Ch. Hist. vol. i, p. 104.

With respect to the time of John's banishment to Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation, there is difference of opinion among the learned. Dr. Adam Clarke says, 'There are many critics, who consider the book of Revelation to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem; and in this opinion they are supported by the most respectable testimonies among the ancients, though the contrary was the more general opinion. Epiphanius says, that John was banished to Patmos by Claudius Cesar: this would bring back the date to about A. D. 50. Andreas, (Bishop of Cesarea, in Cappadocia, about A. D. 500.) in his comment on this book, ch. vi. ver. 16, says, John received this Revelation under the reign of Vespasian. This date might also place it before the final overthrow of the Jewish state; though Vespasian reigned to A. D. 79. The Inscription to this book, in the Syriac Version, first published by De Dieu, in 1627, and afterwards in the London Polyglott, is the following:—'The revelation which God made to John the Evangelist, in the Island of Patmos, to which he was banished by Nero Cesar.' This places it before the year of our Lord 69, and consequently before the destruction of Jerusalem. Of this opinion are many eminent writers, and among them Hentenius, Harduin, Grotius, Lightfoot, Hammond, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Wetstein, and others. See Clarke's Introduction to the Revelation of St John. When, to 'the most respectable testimonies among the ancients,' and the opinions of 'many eminent writers' of more modern date, we add the internal evidence of the book of Revelation itself, we become settled in the opinion that is was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and of course that St. John's banishment to the

ing of St John's address to the church of Smyrna, in the book of Revelation, Fleury says, 'he encourageth them, and fore-telleth that some of them will be in tribulation during the space of ten days, which undoubtedly happened in the reign of Do-

mitian, which was short, and not violent.'

'In the time of this persecution, Domitian, knowing that there were some christians who were originally Jews, of the line of David, and related to our Lord Jesus Christ, who had been acknowledged for Messiah and King, he was apprehensive that they might make an attempt against the state. These people were the grandchildren of Judas, the brother of our Lord according to the flesh, and they were brought to the emperor by a soldier. Domitian asked them if they were of the line of David, and how much land and money they had in their possession? They owned that they were, and said that they had, between two of them, nine thousand denarii, which is about three hundred pounds sterling; that they did not possess that estate in money, but in lands, containing only thirty-nine plethra, which is about seven acres and four perches:—that they paid their taxes, and subsisted out of them, and cultivated their lands themselves.—At the same time they showed their hands to the emperor, which were hardened, and their bodies inured to labor. He asked them what was the kingdom of CHRIST. in what place it was, and when he was to reign? To which they answered, that his kingdom was neither earthly nor of this world, but heavenly and angelic: that it would appear at the end of the world, when he would come in his majesty to judge the quick and dead. Domitian despising them as mean people, sent them away, and gave them their liberty, without doing them any harm. He even ordered that the persecution should be suspended, at least in Judea.'4

It appears hence that the cause of Domitian's persecution of the christians was a misunderstanding with regard to their sentiments. It had been reported to him that they expected a

Isle of Patmos was not in the time of Domitian. This book commences with the notice that it should reveal things which must then shortly come to pass, and the time of which was at hand. And then, after the addresses to the churches, a visionary scene is related, especially in the 6th and 7th chapters, which better applies as a prophetic description of the succession of calamities which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem, than to any other event near that time.

⁶ Fleu. Eccl. Hist. vol. i. b. ii, pp. 151-2-3.

kingdom, and he was jealous of a rival for his throne. From this circumstance it is not to be supposed that the persecution was very general. It was probably confined to men of note. Fleury mentions one such who was put to death: 'Flavius Clemens, a christian, who was related to the emperor, and in the year 95 was his consul, was accused of impiety and Judaism, and by order of the emperor put to death. This was in the year 96. Domitian, who had before rendered himself odious by his cruelties, so enraged the people by this sacrifice of Clemens, who was generally beloved, that it hastened his ruin. He was assassinated on the 17th of September, the same year.'

Concerning the persecution by Domitian, that it was the first persecution which the christians suffered after the destruction of Jerusalem, the renowned historian, Eusebius, gives the following statement: 'Domitian, when he had executed much cruelty against many, and put to death no small multitude of the nobles of Rome, and notable men, beyond all rightful judgment, and punished an infinite company of famous men with exile and loss of their substance, dyeth,—and appointed himself successor of Nero in hatred and war against God. This man also raised persecution against us, although his father Vespasian practised no presumptuous lordliness towards us."

As Eusebius mentions Domitian as having made himself successor to Nero, in hatred and war against God, this historian, who wrote towards A. D. 330, regarded Domitian's persecution against the cause of God, or christian cause, as the next persecution after that of Nero, and the first, of course, after the destruction of Jerusalem. What kinds of punishment Domitian inflicted on the christians, Eusebius does not say. It appears that his greatest violence was against the nobles of his own religion, whom he viewed with political suspicions. Tillemont says that 'Dodwell pretends that this persecution (as it related to the christians) proceeded no further than banishment, and not to death, nor even to torments.'3 He must of course, have reckoned the death of the consul Clemens, not among the persecutions of the christians, but among the slaughters of the Roman nobles; nor ought his admission that Clemens

¹ Fleu. Eccl. Hist. vol. i, b. ii, pp. 153—4. translated by Hanmer,—b. iii, chap. 15.

² Euseb. Eccl. Hist.—
³ Till. Eccl. Mem. vol. ii, p.

'might have suffered as a christian,' to be construed as inconsistent with his opinion that the persecution was not designed to pursue christians unto death. But though Tillemont differs in opinion from Dodwell as to what is most probable in this particular, we have seen that the convictions of his mind, from his extensive historical researches, constrained him to say, that

Domitian's persecution 'was short, and not violent.'

On this persecution Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History, says, 'though, immediately after the death of Nero, the rage of this first persecution against the christians ceased, yet the flame broke out anew in the year 93 or 94, under Domitian. This persecution was occasioned, if we may give credit to Hegesippus, by the fears that Domitian was under of losing the empire; for he had been informed, that, among the relations of Christ, a man should arise, who, possessed of a turbulent and ambitious spirit, was to excite commotions in the state, and aim at supreme dominion. However that may have been, the persecution renewed by this unworthy prince was extremely violent, though his untimely death put a stop to it not long after it commenced.' In saying that this persecution was violent, we think Mosheim must have written under an impression derived from reading those christian Apologists, who, disposed to make the most of persecutions, have, in their general expressions on this, given it a high coloring. For when we inquire into particulars, there is nothing on record which makes Domitian's persecution, as it related to christians, to appear violent. No particular cases of severity on christians are noted, but the death of Clemens, and the banishment of Domitilla. There is, in addition to these, the story of St John being cast into boiling oil, and of his afterwards being banished to the isle of Patmos. But Mosheim confesses, what other learned men maintain, that the account given by Tertullian, and others, of John being cast into a vessel of boiling oil, and of his miraculous deliverance, is doubtful.² And as to his banishment to the isle of Patmos, our reasons are shown in a note on page 97, for believing that it took place, not in Domitian's reign, but before the destruction of Jerusalem. The account given of Domitian by Eusebius, implies that what fell on the christians was the lightest part of his cruelty. 'Domitian,' says Eusebius in the

¹ Mosh. Eccl. Hist., cent. i, part i, § 15. See Note to Mosh. Comment. vol. i, p. 191.

passage before quoted, 'when he had exercised much cruelty against many, and put to death no small multitude of the nobles of Rome, and notable men, beyond all rightful judgment, and punished an infinite company of famous men, with exile and the loss of their substance, dyeth.—This man also raised persecution against us, although his father Vespasian practised no presumptuous lordliness towards us.' It is observable that he here mentions Domitian's persecution against the christians, without the use of those qualifying terms, which he applies to his cruelty towards other classes of men, to express the violence of his treatment of them. But Dr Mosheim, in repeating the account of Domitian's persecution of the christians, in his 'Commentaries on the Ecclesiastical History of the First Three Centuries,' a later work than his Ecclesiastical History, drops the expression of the violence of this persecution. And concerning the time of this persecution, though, as we have seen, Mosheim states in his Ecclesiastical History that it began in the year 93 or 94, in this later work, written upon a review of the former, he says that it began 'about the year 94 or 95." This opinion is not inconsistent with that of Tillemont. He believes, on the authority of Eusebius and St Jerom, supported by Juvenal and Lactantius, that the persecution under Domitian began in the year 95.2 And it is on all hands admitted that this persecution ended very soon after it commenced, and that peace was restored, and continued unto the christian Church until after the close of the first century. 'Nerva Domitian's successor,' says Milner, 'published a pardon for those who were condemned for impiety, recalled those who were banished, and forbade the accusing of any men on account of impiety, or Judaism. Others, who were under accusation or under sentence of condemnation, now escaped by the lenity of Nerva. This brings us to the close of the century, in which we behold the christians, for the present, in a state of external peace."3

IV. We have now placed before the reader, as specimens, a few of the prophecies of our Lord, which appear to have been designed to warn his followers of a season of persecution to be suffered by them before the destruction of the great city, and overthrow of the nation of the Jews; and to promise them

Mosh. Comment. vol. i, § 36.
 Miln. Ch. Hist. vol. i, p. 105.

protection during the execution of that destruction, and a succeeding season of peace and prosperity. We have also brought forward the substance of the history of the christian Church, from the death of Christ, to the end of the first century, so far as it relates to the subjects of these prophecies. And we consider that as lovers of the christian religion, we have occasion for grateful joy, in finding so full a record of the fulfilment of those prophecies of our Saviour; being thus furnished with the best evidence of the divinity of his character and mission.

From the death of Christ, to the destruction of Jerusalem, his Church did suffer much disturbance from persecutions, mostly from the hands and by the instigation of the Jews. During the rage of those calamities which overthrew the Jewish nation, the christians were preserved. And after that event, the Jews having lost their power and perhaps in a measure their disposition to molest them, the christians enjoyed a considerable season of undisturbed rest from persecution. They enjoyed a season of at least twenty five years of quietude, without molestation, from the year seventy when, the Jews' overthrow was consummated, to the year ninety five, the commencement of Domitian's persecution. And with the exception of this light persecution of about one year's continuance, the time of rest to the christian Church extended to between thirty and forty years, which probably run out the natural lives of all who became followers of Christ while he ministered on earth, and of most of those who espoused his cause in season to share with his disciples in the persecutions which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem.

When the christians had witnessed what their Master had before told them concerning their own sufferings for his cause, and then concerning the destruction of their persecutors, and preservation, and succeeding season of peace, they had an entrance into life of a double nature. They not only received a deliverance, from these persecutions which had threatened them with death, into the joyment of their natural lives in external peace and safety, 1 but these events must have so disciplined their minds, and confirmed and built up their faith, as to raise them also into a very enlarged enjoyment of the everlasting life of the

Matt. xvi, 25, 26; xxiv, 31. Luke xxi, 28.

gospel religion. What a pleasing and wonderful fulfilment of the Saviour's prophetic declarations, some of which were brought forward in the first division of this piece! The reader may have the satisfaction of reflecting that he needs not wrest these prophetic scriptures from their most natural meaning, by any private interpretation, to avoid opposing them to fact.

In concluding this article, we will offer a remark or two, touching the importance of the giving of those prophetic declarations of events to transpire on earth, by Him whose errand was to teach men heavenly things. With reference to this subject of inquiry we have before suggested, that by viewing these prophetic testimonies, in connexion with the well attested history of the events which have fulfilled them, we are furnished with a valuable proof of the divinity of our Saviour's mission; and hereby we are enabled to receive with stronger faith his doctrines on heavenly things.

But it was especially important to the christians of that age, that they should be well instructed concerning the things unto which these prophecies relate, that they might be encouraged to hold out in their faithfulness through the season of trial, and know how to escape the evils which should fall upon others. We cannot do better on this point, than to use the following

language of Newcome Cappe.

The unbelieving Jews were the great enemies and persecutors of the christian name. They considered their converted countrymen as apostates, and the converted Gentiles as the supporters and encouragers of this apostacy. By the visitations coming on Jerusalem and Judea, the power and confidence of the Jews every where would be considerably shaken and impaired; their reverence for the Mosaic institution, and their malignity against the gospel, by this event, must, both of them, be considerably abated. Crest fallen and confounded, they would have less spirit and less inclination too, to meditate mischief against the converts of the gospel; and indeed they would probably find less offence in any thing disparaging to Judaism and its peculiarities.

'Christians therefore of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, were interested in the coming of Christ to the destruction of

¹ Matt. xiii, 43,—xxv, 29, 46. John v, 28, 29. Though the believers already had everlasting life, as in John iii, 36, yet at this time they were raised into a new and enlarged enjoyment of it.

Jerusalem, as a day of redemption to themselves; it was an object of hope for them, the removal of a great impediment by which the progress of the gospel was obstructed; a triumph over their persecutors of much importance, as to themselves, so also to their cause, for hereby it had free course, and was glorified. The first christians, it is manifest, whether Jewish or Gentile converts, had much interest in this event; and the expectation of it was of importance to them, as it would help, and they needed such aid, to support and cheer them under the heavy sufferings they drew down upon themselves, by their adherence to Jesus and his gospel; it was wise, therefore, that this hope should be set before them, and by repeated admonitions, references, and allusions, kept alive and active in their minds.

'Moreover, the sentiments which would be excited by an event like this, of a nature so devoutly to be wished for by them, and so capable of inspiring, both in its arrival and during its approach, the emotions of desire, joy, courage, triumph; though such sentiments in respect of such an object, naturally would be, and in reason ought to be, entertained; yet still they should be conceived, and indulged, and expressed, with moderation and in prudence, under the correction too of charity and candor; they would need some guard over them for their restriction and regulation; and for the like end and purpose, it must be acknowledged to be wise, that events tending to excite such feeling, should be expected and prepared for, and that therefore those persons who were thus interested in them, should be informed and cautioned on the subject; assisted in the just reception of such occurrences, and seriously admonished of their approach.

All christians, particularly during the time when they were suffering hard things for Jesus, and the truth; when their love was in danger of waxing cold, and their faith perhaps failing; were most interested to be reminded, that the day was coming when they would not only profess the gospel with more security and comfort, but would perceive in the events that were approaching, new and powerful confirmation of its truth, and new and irresistible demonstration, that heaven was on its side.' 1

ART. X.

Trial of Creeds.

' Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.' 2 Tim.i, 13.

In this trial we propose to restrict our inquiries to a few particulars, and in regard to them, conciseness will be studied. The few articles of faith, which will be selected for trial, will consist of those only, which serve to distinguish those of the christian profession who style themselves Orthodox, from other denominations of christians.

With a view to render our subject easy of comprehension, and to bring it to the understanding of the reader in as clear a light as possible, we shall, in the first place, set up a standard of divine authority, to which it will be perfectly easy to resort, and by this standard proceed to try the several items of human creeds, which may be brought under examination. The standard we propose to set up, by which to try the creeds of men, we shall find by reference to St Paul's direction to Timothy. 2 Timothy i, 13: 'Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.'

The form of sound words, which Timothy had received of the apostle, constitutes the standard to which we shall refer in the following examination. That this standard may be duly appreciated, it seems proper to bring into notice the relation which subsisted between the apostle and Timothy. This we learn from the circumstance of the comparative ages of the two; the apostle being advanced in years, and Timothy being but a That the apostle considered himself to be in the responsible relation of a father to a son, when writing to Timothy, is evident from the introduction of both his epistles to that We see, then, in this relation that of a father to a son; that of a tutor to his pupil, and especially that of an aged, experienced and faithful minister of Christ, to one who needed instruction, and who looked to this father, to this instructer, to this experienced minister, for the same. The general character of the two epistles of Paul to Timothy fully corroborates the foregoing remarks respecting the relation which subsisted

between this father and son. They both speak the language

of instruction, command and precept.

From this relation, which we find did in fact subsist between St Paul and Timothy, it is safe to infer, that in all the instructions, which the apostle gave his son in the faith, all necessary caution was duly regarded, which was necessary, in order to be rightly understood. Whatever related to important points of doctrine we must suppose was fully expressed; that no words were wanting, nor any used which were needless. Whatever related to the duties and labors of a minister of the gospel, was clearly communicated, and properly urged, in words which were well understood. With these inferences in view, it is easy to discern why the apostle should be careful to require his pupil to hold fast the form of sound words, which he had heard of him.

Respecting creeds, we shall contend that neither Timothy nor any other professed christian, ever had any right to set up one, or to impose one on man, which cannot be expressed in the words of divine inspiration. In his instructions to Timothy, St Paul had fully communicated his doctrine, as we learn from his second epistle, iii, 10. If Timothy was fully acquainted with the apostle's doctrine, he must have learned it by means of his intercourse with him. He had travelled with him, had often heard him preach the gospel; in which preaching there must have been displayed an extensive use of the scriptures of Moses and the prophets, as well as a free use of such language as the spirit of truth dictated. The year before he received this second epistle from his father in the faith, he received the first, in which the doctrines of christianity and the duties of the christian minister are clearly set forth in a form of sound words, from which he could have no right to depart.

If after all the instructions which Timothy had, by all the means which he had enjoyed, received from the apostle, he had taken the liberty to set down and invent a creed, purporting to embrace the doctrine of christianity, the leading points of which could not be expressed in any form of words which he had ever heard St Paul use, or which could be found in any of his epistles, or in any of the scriptures of Moses and the prophets; and after having completed his work, had endeavored to impose his invention on the church of Ephesus, over which he was ordained a bishop, is it likely that church would receive

it? Would they not have said to their minister, We have heard St Paul preach the gospel, we have heard him largely expatiate on all its important points; but we never heard him use the form of words which you have employed to express your creed, nor have we ever understood him to communicate any such doctrine? Would they not have told him that they had in their possession an excellent epistle which was written to them by St Paul from Rome, in which, though the doctrine of the gospel was clearly stated, nothing of the most important points of his creed was to be found? If after being thus repulsed, by his own church, he had gone to his father in the faith, and had laid his creed before his venerable tutor, what would the apostle have been likely to say to his son in the faith? May we not rationally suppose he would have inquired for the authority by which such a creed was produced? Might he not, with much propriety, have asked Timothy why he had so widely departed from all the instructions he had ever given him, and especially from that in which he was required to 'hold fast the form of sound words which he had heard of him?' In such a case how could Timothy have answered?

Having thus stated the nature of the trial of creeds, to which we propose to devote some attention, we may proceed to quote some of the most important points of faith, which have been incorporated in human creeds, and which have been made the indispensable standard of Orthodoxy. These we shall bring to the trial above described.

1. The first subject to which we shall call the attention of our readers, is that of what theologians call the Godhead.

In the Shorter Catechism, agreed upon by the reverend assembly of divines at Westminster, we find the following question; 'How many persons are there in the Godhead?' To this question the Rev. authors of the catechism have given the following answer: 'There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.'

In the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, this subject of the Godhead is expressed as follows; 'In unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is

eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally

proceeding from the Father and the Son.'

This article concerning the Godhead reads as follows, in the Andover confession: 'I believe that in the Godhead are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in pow-

er and glory.'

If divines, in room of endeavoring to express some important truth, which belongs to the system of divine wisdom, had made it their sole object to express the most absurd thing they could imagine; and something that would, turn it what way we should please, violate our reason, we see not how they could have better succeeded, than they have in the foregoing statements concerning their belief in the Godhead. The idea of three persons in but one being is utterly inconceivable. To speak of the equality of three persons, is to deny the fact that they are but one being. To say that the person of the Son was eternally begotten, involves the absurdity that the Father begat the Son, but that there never was a time when he did it. Such confusion and contradiction have been imposed on the christian church for ages, have given rise to disgraceful contentions, excited a violent persecuting spirit, and so degraded the reason of men as to render them mere dupes, not in respect to this subject only, but in regard to divinity generally. But it is not our purpose to enlarge on the unreasonableness of the doctrine of the Godhead, as expressed in the creed, but to bring to the consideration of the reader the fact, that this article is not, and that it cannot be expressed, in the language of divine inspiration. Here we at once discover the propriety of the apostle's caution to his son Timothy, to 'hold fast the form of sound words;' and we also see the unhappy consequences which have resulted from a departure from so wise and prudent a requisition. If divines had never violated this injunction of the inspired apostle, it is certain that such an article of faith. as the one we are considering, would never have been known in the world; and consequently would never have occasioned. the evils in the church, which evidently owe their origin to it.

We shall here take the liberty to ask, why this article of faith, concerning three persons in the Godhead, is not found in the sacred writings? Nowhere in the Scriptures do we read that there are three persons in the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is language not to be found

in the Bible; it is a form of words for which we search the Scriptures in vain. If this article of faith be a divine truth, it is evident that it is a truth which our Creator did not see fit to express in scripture language. If then our divines believe it. would it not be in them a commendable modesty not to undertake to express it more plainly than God himself saw good to express it? Does it well become them to undertake to mend the Scriptures, and to make up what they deem deficiencies in divine revelation? If they tell us that this article of their creed is plainly taught in the Bible, why are they not satisfied with that form of sound words by which the Holy Ghost has expressed it? No professed christian would dissent from any article of a creed that was expressed in any form of sound words, which could be quoted from the Scriptures; though many might seriously doubt the necessity of framing a written creed in the very language of Scripture, as it would be quite as convenient to believe it as it stands in the faithful record, as when it is quoted out of it.

If Timothy had written such an article of faith concerning the Godhead as the one we are considering, and had presented it to the apostle Paul for his consideration or approbation, may we not suppose that the apostle would have asked him if he had duly regarded the direction to hold fast the form of sound words, which he had heard of him? Would he not have been likely to have referred him to a passage in his first epistle to him, which we find in the second chapter, where he would have found his notions about three persons in the Godhead, and concerning God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, most clearly refuted? As we may have more than one occasion to refer to this passage, it may be beneficial here to insert it: 'I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in

faith and verity. I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere,

lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.'

By looking carefully over the preceding chapter, and by a proper attention to this, we readily discover that it was the intention of the inspired apostle to state, to his son in the faith, some of the most important items of the christian faith. And in view of all the circumstances of the case, as far as we are able to see, if the apostle ever had any occasion to avoid ambiguity, and to express himself so as not to be misunderstood, this was that occasion. He had just been speaking, in the latter part of the first chapter of some, who, having put away faith and a good conscience, had made shipwreck of faith; and he then proceeded to exhort Timothy, and to state certain important points of doctrine, in a form of sound words, which, if not treated with violent cavilling, can be misunderstood by none.

After having exhorted Timothy to pray, to intercede, and to give thanks for all men, he assigns as a reason therefor, that it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth! Then as a reason for this, he adds, 'For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' The apostle here says, 'there is one God,' but he says nothing about this God consisting of three persons. If it had been the intention of the apostle, as it evidently was, to express the strict unity of the Godhead, it seems that he could not have expressed it more clearly. And if it had been the design of the apostle to give to the mediator a character distinct from God, he surely could not have done it in a manner more intelligible: 'There is one mediator, between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.'

Concerning the Godhead, and concerning the mediator, the apostle here expresses divine truth, in a form of sound words, to which if divines had paid due attention, they never would have incorporated into the creed of the church the article we have been considering; and which we find, on due trial, to possess no higher claims than those of human authority, in a case too in which that authority stands in direct opposition to the-authority of God.

2. Concerning the decrees of God, the Presbyterian Confession reads as follows: 'By the decree of God, for the

manifestation of his own glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace. . . . The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

In the Shorter Catechism we find the doctrine of partial and particular election in the following questions and answers: 'Q. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell? A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miserics of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever. Q. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery? A. God having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation by a Redeemer.'

The Andover creed says: 'Being morally incapable of recovering the image of his Creator, which was lost in Adam, every man is justly exposed to eternal damnation.... That God, of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, and that he entered into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of this state of sin and misery by a Redeemen.

The Presbyterian Confession, the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms, and the Andover creed all agree that 'God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.'

According to these quotations from the orthodox creeds, the

eternal destiny of some angels and of some of the human race, was fixed in dishonor and unto wrath, from all eternity; and the number of these unhappy wretches was so definitely fixed, that it could, by no means, be increased, or be diminished. Before they existed, yea, more than millions of millions of ages before they existed, they were thus foreordained to endless dishonor and wrath for their sin; but for no other sin than God foreordained they should commit. Thus from all eternity God ordained the sin, and the dishonor and wrath for sin, and when it suited himself best he brought both angels and men into existence that they might commit the sin and endure the dishonor and wrath; and all this 'to the praise of his glorious justice.' We must here be indulged in asking whether, if the almighty Creator had been disposed to do wrong, he could, in relation to these angels and men, have done worse, or inflicted on them a greater evil, or one more unjust? We cannot see how injustice could possibly be carried to a greater extent, or how a darker shade can be cast upon it. It really seems that the Orthodox owe it to themselves and to the world, but more to the Father of our spirits, to show, if they can, that there is real justice in what they have attributed to the decrees of God. If they can do this, they are verily guilty of neglect; for the whole fabric of their religion is suffering greatly for want of its being done. But in room of doing this, it is the constant practice of their preachers and writers, generally speaking, to keep out of sight this article of their creed; and yet they will not admit to christian fellowship and communion any who will not assent to So far from endeavoring to bring this article of their faith to the understanding of their hearers and readers, and attempting to show its rationality or any authority for it from Scripture, or its harmony with the perfections of God, they preach, exhort and write just as they would if they believed nothing of it, even as they would if they believed there were no decrees of God. that consign any of the human family to everlasting misery. Who would believe, should he hear one of our revival preachers exhorting sinners to repent, to seek religion, and to obtain an interest in Christ, that thereby they might escape the divine wrath, in the eternal world, that the same preacher believed that all who will finally suffer such wrath hereafter, were, from all eternity, ordained to such a condemnation, and the number of such wretches was so fixed, by the decree of God, that all the sin that can possibly be committed cannot increase it, nor

all the religious duties which men can practise diminish it? Nothing to us is more evident than that the whole of the religious proceedings of the Orthodox is a direct denial of this article of their own creed.

If we consider the terms in which the Shorter Catechism expresses the doctrine of the fall, and of election, we are struck with the palpable contradiction which we find thus stated: 'All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever. God having out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a redeemer.' According to this, those who, from all eternity were elected unto everlasting life, and whose salvation was always secure by a covenant of grace, were by the fall made liable to the pains of hell forever. No contradiction could be more palpably stated. The fact is clear, if the orthodox doctrine of election and reprobation be true, neither the fall of man, as they call it nor any sin which has been since committed could possibly render either the elected, or the reprobated, liable to the pains of hell forever; for the former were always as secure from such a condemnation as the eternal decree and covenant of God could render them, and the latter were sentenced to it by a decree of God millions of ages before they existed.

But it is time to bring this article to the trial, by inquiring whether it be stated in any form of sound words, which are recorded in the Scriptures? In vain do we search the Scriptures to find it recorded in them, that 'by the decree of God, for the manifestation of his own glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.' That He who created man had a purpose, in his eternal mind, respecting our final destiny, there is no reason to doubt. Nor can we reasonably deny that the purposes of the Creator, respecting all beings he has made, are in him definite and unchangeable, and that they will all be accomplished. But that he has foreordained some men and some angels to what divines mean by everlasting death, we find no evidence in any thing we know of God, either in his works or his word. St Paul speaks of the divine purpose, which God purposed in himself concerning all things which are in heaven and

on earth; but his statement is evidently in opposition to this article of faith, which we now have in trial. See Eph. i. 9, 10: 'Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.' So far from excluding some angels and some men, by this gracious purpose of God, the apostle evidently includes all intelligences in heaven and on earth. And this agrees with his statement to the Philippians, ii. 9—11: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Can we reasonably believe that he who wrote these words, and who elsewhere, in his writings, vindicated the sentiment they express, believed the article of faith, which we now have in trial? Not only in thefirst chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, and in the second of his epistle to the Philippians, did the apostle plainly express the doctrine of universal reconciliation by Christ, but in many other passages of his epistles. We here add what he says on this subject in Col. i. 19-22: 'For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell; and (having made peace through the blood of the cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in hea-And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death; to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprovable in his sight.' Here it is clearly seen, that God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself, was to reconcile, by Jesus Christ, all things to himself, whether they be things in heaven, or things in earth; and that being so reconciled, they should be holy and unblameable. How will appear the article of faith we are examining, if we compare it with the above testimony concerning the divine purpose in the reconciliation and holiness of all beings in earth and in heaven? Here stands the article—'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.' Let the honest, the unprejudiced

christian look at this comparison, and let him decide in his mind which form of words, that used by the apostle, or that used by those divines who wrote the creed, his heart most approves. It is worthy of remark, that when the apostle states, in the most explicit manner, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,' he assures us that this universal submission is 'to the glory of God the Father.' We compare this with the fact that in the article of faith, which we have in trial, we are told that the decree of God, which from eternity consigned some men and some angels to everlasting death, was for the purpose of manifesting God's own glory. According to the form of sound words, which we have quoted from the apostle, universal reconciliation to God, by Jesus Christ, is to the glory of God. But according to the form of words contained in the creed, and in which this article of faith is expressed, God, for the purpose of manifesting his glory, foreordained some men and some angels to a state of everlasting unreconciliation and death; to a state of sin, dishonor and wrath.

Before we close our remarks, respecting this article of faith, an article which has caused as much, to say the least, of disunion, in the church, of contentions, among professors of christianity, not to mention the thousands of instances of mental derangements, which have ended in madness and self-destruction, as all other dogmas in divinity put together, we must call on our readers duly and solemnly to consider the fact that the article never was and that it never can be expressed in any form of words found in the sacred writings; and also, that if no article of faith had ever been incorporated into the creed of the church, which was not expressed in the language of divine inspiration, the article we have been examining would never have been heard of by christians.

3. Having taken some notice of the decree of God, according to the creeds, we shall now notice what they teach concerning the redemption of man by Jesus Christ. Here we shall find a studied agreement with the doctrine of election and reprobation. On this subject the Presbyterian Confession has the following form of words: 'Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and

the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory. . . . As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.' The Shorter Catechism has the following question and answer: ' Q. Who is the redeemer of God's elect? A. The only redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ.' That the belief that our redeemer gave himself a ransom for none but such as our heavenly Father purposed to bring, as sons, unto glory, we have no reason to doubt. But will this article in the creeds bear to be tried by any form of sound words which the Scriptures furnish?

Let us again refer to our quotation from 1 Timothy ii. Here the apostle, in a most solemn manner, assures us that the man Christ Jesus, the one mediator between God and men, gave himself a ransom for all men. We have the same apostle's testimony again: on this subject in Heb. ii, 9. 'But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.' this agrees all the scripture testimony respecting this subject; we need therefore to mention but one more. 1 John, ii, 1, 2: 'My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.' With such testimony before them, how was it possible that divines, who were honest and sincerely pious, who were daily offering up prayers that they might succeed in forming creeds, which would render divine truth more plain and easier to be understood than divine inspiration had left it, after all, come to the conclusion that Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all men, who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. is the redeemer of only a part of mankind?

The open opposition of the creeds, in relation to this subject, to all that is found in the Scriptures respecting it, is so very ap-

palling to candid people, who feel any respect for the Bible, that the clergy in these regions find that they must disavow this doctrine, and profess to believe that the mediator made atonement for the sins of all men. This they have done, although they have thereby involved their creed in as great a contradiction as can be stated in words. Thus reads the Andover confession: - 'That, being morally incapable of recovering the image of his Creator, which was lost in Adam, every man is justly exposed to eternal damnation. . . . That God, of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, and that he entered into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of this state of sin and misery by a redeemer; that the only redeemer of the elect is the eternal Son of God, who for this purpose became man, and continues to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever; that Christ, as our redeemer, executeth the office of a Prophet, Priest, and King; that agreeably to the covenant of redemption, the Son of God, and he alone, by his sufferings and death, has made atonement for the sins of all men.' Reader, look at God, from all eternity elected some to everlasting life, entered into a covenant of grace to deliver these elected ones out of their estate of sin and misery, by a redeemer; this covenant of grace did in no sense concern those who were not elected, and yet, agreeably to this covenant, the atonement was made for the sins of all men. Who ever read a greater or a more palpable contradiction than this? Look again: Notwithstanding this creed says that God, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, and that he entered into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of this state of sin and misery, by a redeemer; yet every man is justly liable to eternal damnation. Now as a compensation for believing all these contradictions, our clergy enjoy the happy privilege of lifting up their voices, and of proclaiming aloud to a sinful world, that the eternal Son of God has made atonement for the sins of all men. They can stand by the altar of this priesthood of the Son of God, with the covenant of redemption in open view, and pointing sinners to the blood of the cross, by which the sins of all men are atoned for, invite every sinner to embrace the Saviour by faith, and to trust in him, and in him alone for eternal life; all the time adroitly keeping out of sight the fact, that they believe that only some of mankind are elected unto everlasting life.

may think it somewhat doubtful whether so much contradiction and artful management are absolutely necessary in the cause of divine holiness. It is difficult to make all men believe that such proceedings are, in a moral point of view, far above the intrigues of carnal minded men; and we should not be much surprised if some should think they fall far below common honor and honesty. At least, such are our views of poor, imperfect mortals, that we are not confident that instances of what is here hinted, may not now exist among us.

4. The doctrine of the everlasting damnation of infants, though so horrible, and which has become of late so unfashionable that many of the clergy have renounced it, and some are induced to deny its having been embraced in the doctrines of Orthodoxy, is plainly implied in the following article of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith: 'Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth.' This form of words certainly implies that there are infants who are not elected; it also as plainly implies that those infants, who are not elected, are not regenerated and saved by Christ. Both the Larger and Shorter Catechisms fully support the same most horrible doctrine.

If the divines, who framed these creeds and confessions, had duly regarded the injunction of Paul to Timothy, which we use as a standard, by which to try these creeds of man's invention, it is certain that they never would have been the propagators of a doctrine so blasphemous in its moral character, so withering to parental affections, and so abhorrent to every sentiment of humanity. Who would undertake to set forth in any form of scripture language this doctrine? Surely Jesus knew of no such doctrine when he took little children in his arms, and blessed them, and informed the people that of such was the kingdom of heaven.

Will it be said, that as the clergy now disavow this doctrine, or, that if they do not deny believing it, they do not hold it up in their preaching, we ought not to lay it to their charge? We reply: we are by no means inclined to accuse our clergy; our labor is to disprove their errors. We are glad if they have, by any means, acquired enough of sentiments and feelings which are honorable to our Creator and kindly disposed toward mankind, to induce them to abandon a doctrine so shock-

ing to every virtuous sentiment. But they must be informed, for men are not in the habit of correcting their own mistakes, that if they once give up the damnation of infants, they will have to allow, that all infants who die in infancy throughout the whole earth, Jewish, Mahometan, Pagan, as well as Christian, are elected unto everlasting life. Should such a doctrine become universal, who would desire an infant to live?

5. The belief that the Scriptures are the only guide, which the Father of the spirits of all flesh has afforded mankind, by which men can render themselves acceptable to him, is expressed in the Shorter Catechism as follows: 'the word of God which is contained in the scriptures of the old and new testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.' The Larger Catechism says, 'The holy scriptures of the old and new testament are the word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.' Again: 'They, who, having never heard the gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the laws of that religion which they profess.' The Presbyterian Confession has the following form of words:—'Much less can men, not professing the christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may is very pernicious, and to be detested.' According to the doctrine held forth in these several quotations, only the comparatively small portion of the human family, who have had the scriptures, of what we call the old and the new testaments, have ever had it in their power to serve God acceptably, or to obtain salvation. But is this doctrine capable of being stated in any form of sound words which are found in the Bible? No; the apostle Paul teaches us the contrary, as do also reason and common sense. See Rom. ii. 13, 15. 'For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.

However this article of Orthodox faith may serve the selfish and narrow purposes of the clergy, by kindling the fever which rages for missionary enterprise, it is destitute of any support from the Scriptures, and is a dishonor to God, and a scandal to the religion of our blessed Saviour.

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ART. XI.

Religious Liberty.

Fifty five years have passed away, since it was solemnly declared by our venerated forefathers that all men are born free and equal. A band of enlightened and fearless statesmen then pledged to each other, to their country, and to their God, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, for the maintenance of the rights of man. As christians we are bound to respect the names and memories of those worthies, and in our capacities as such, we would be devoutly grateful for the religious, as well as for the civil blessings obtained for us by their wisdom and prowess; but we would in all these things recognize the unseen hand that gave direction to their energies, and by crowning their labors with success put the seal of immortality upon their well earned fame.

The work which they begun was intended to secure mental and religious, as well as civil liberty, to the inhabitants of this country, and to render it the high privilege of their posterity, to extend these blessings to an enslaved and suffering world. They began the work of emancipation—they did not, for they could not, finish it. Nor can the present generation complete all that was embraced in their designs. They saw, we have reason to believe, as with the ken of inspiration, the grand results to which their efforts tended; but they could not have expected to live long enough to witness the fulfilment of all their hopes. They labored in the field of improvement in the morning of that bright day whose progressive glory we behold, whose noontide splendor our children may witness, but whose evening shall be merged in millennial light, liberty and happiness, or leave the world in darkness that may be felt. We see, and to some extent en-

joy, the benefits of their labors; and we shall prove ourselves unworthy of the blessings conferred upon us, if we do not exert ourselves to advance the cause to which they devoted their all.

With a view of contributing what little we can in aid of those principles which are dear to every enlightened and benevolent heart, and upon the prevalence of which depends, more than upon anything else, the happiness of mankind, we design to submit to the inspection of our readers some few reflections upon the subject of religious liberty as connected with that civil freedom which was purchased for us at the expense of the blood and toil of the patriot statesmen and heroes of the revolution. And we shall take, as the basis of our remarks, the generally acknowedged fact, that no nation, people, nor individual, can enjoy civil liberty, unless the mass of the people are mentally, morally, and religiously free. And, that this subject may be presented in its true light to the understandings of our readers, we must ask their attention to several important considerations, which will be seen to stand related to the foregoing proposition.

1. In order for an individual to be truly free, his mind must understand its own powers, conceive justly of its own

dignity, and fearlessly exercise its own functions.

He whose mental faculties are bound down to certain opinions, who dares not think beyond the limits of his political or religious creed, or whose powers of mind remain inactive and dull, from the want of cultivation, it matters not whether his creed is denominated liberal or illiberal, orthodox or heretical, that man is subjected to a species of servitude not less grievous than that of the African slave. Before man can enjoy true liberty, his mind must realize that it possesses an inherent power which brooks no restraint—that it is allied to the immortal Divinity—that it ranks next in order to the angels of heaven and that it is its appropriate avocation to soar in the regions of space, to dive into the arcana of nature, to penetrate the darkness of the valley of death, and to revel in the sunbeams of eternal day. It must recognize its right to take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, to ascend into heaven and feast upon the bread of life; and, if there be anything in the fancied regions of horror and despair upon which one thought can be profitably bestowed, it must feel that it may investigate even that. We are not free until the spell of superstition has been broken-until petty tyrants and

nonentities have lost their influence over our mental faculties. No—there lives not the man who enjoys true liberty whose mind is enslaved. We are not free unless our minds are in a situation to investigate any subject upon which reason can exercise itself.

2. No man can justly be considered free, unless he is protected in the enjoyment of his own opinions upon every sub-

ject which concerns his present or future happiness.

In the absence of this protection, the mind cannot act freely; for when the persons, characters, or interests of mankind are endangered by an avowal of certain peculiarities in their sentiments, the mental faculties shrink from the performance of their office, and soon become accustomed to a tame and degrading acquiescence in whatever happens to be popular. We know that 'the powers that be' have presumptuously assumed that the right belonged to them, to dictate and enforce laws for the regulation of human opinions; but we need not now inquire whether any man or number of men have the right to dictate creeds, whether civil or religious, for the belief or observance of individuals, or communities; for the world having aroused from the lethargy of ages, has set the seal of infamy upon all such assumptions. And besides, our reply to all arguments in favor of such measures, is founded upon the fact that no combination of men can control our opinions. The human mind can never be subjected to any extraneous power—if it determines to be free, it will be free. Those in authority may require and obtain, from individuals and communities, an outward or formal assent to specified propositions; but they may as well legislate upon the winds of heaven, as upon the opinions of one who has firmly resolved that his mind shall not be enslaved. The mind is, it of right ought to be, it of necessity will be free, unless it chooses to be otherwise. And though force may render an outward acquiescence expedient or indispensable, it will not, for it cannot, alter our opinions. The terrors of this world, and of that which is to come, may be put in requisition to extort confessions and produce a uniformity of sentiment; still, when all is done that ignorance can devise or tyranny inflict, there will be the same difference of opinion.

The question now arises—not whether the mind may be free if it wills to be so—but whether all in this country are protected in the unrestrained enjoyment of their opinions? Do the laws and usages of republican America extend, to all alike, the

privilege of worshipping God agreeably to the dictates of conscience? Are no penalties incurred by an honest avowal of unpopular sentiments? Do we run no risk in being known as the advocates of doctrines which differ from those of the majority? To these inquiries it is often replied-all opinions are tolerated by the laws and customs of this country. But what do we mean when we say that all opinions are tolerated? By whom are all opinions tolerated? By our rulers? By our state or national legislatures? By the dominant sects? And how are the citizens of this country tolerated? By being allowed to entertain their honest opinions? We hear much said about the liberality of our government, and of the different sects, in allowing mankind to believe and worship as they please; but if by this it is implied that one sect, or the government considered as a party in this business, has a right to interfere in matters of opinion—if this be toleration, we regard it as a disgrace to our institutions. Who, we demand, ever gave one class of men the right to tolerate the opinions of others? A few plain facts will suffice to convince the considerate mind, that no man ever had that right, strictly speaking; that no number of men ever had that right—and more, that no human being can, without parting with his birthright, convey to others the right to tolerate his opinions.

All communities are composed of beings who possess certain inalienable rights. The great object of all human associations is, or should be, this—viz. by surrendering some specified and well-defined rights appertaining to individuals, to secure certain advantages, which, without this surrendry and association -and we may add, union of interests, could not be obtained. And that association approaches nearest to perfection, which secures the greatest amount of good, with the least sacrifices of individual rights. Hence it is proper to say that a community is prosperous and happy when the individuals composing it are prosperous and happy. Separate from this consideration, there would be no propriety in saying that a community is in a prosperous condition. The general good is not, cannot be, made up of individual suffering. A community is degraded and enslaved when the individuals composing it are deprived of their rights; and when it is ascertained that the association has become productive of more evils than benefits, justice requires

that it should cease by its own limitation.

It has been said that in this case certain individual rights are

surrendered, in order that certain advantages may be secured: but there are rights naturally appertaining to each individual which are inalienable—of which he can never be justly deprived—of which he cannot lawfully deprive himself. These have never been surrendered by any intelligent citizen of republican America; nor is a surrendry of them either required or permitted by the genius of our institutions. Among these is the inherent and inalienable right of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience, and of promulgating, as well as of entertaining, such opinions, as to the understanding of each individual shall appear just—so far as this may be done without infringing the rights of others. This—a privilege far dearer than life, without which life would be a burden, and society a curse—this legacy of a kind Creator—the birthright of every intelligent being, has never been relinquished by any who understood their duty to themselves, their God, or their country.

Is the reason still demanded why it has not been surrendered? It is because no benefit could have been derived from such a measure; or if there could have been, no combination of men ever had any just authority for requiring a sacrifice so great. Neither has the Ruler of nations given to any. human being, the right to yield up this privilege. Were it possible for a community justly to require a relinquishment of this privilege, and had each individual a right to forego its enjoyment, still, the surrendry would be detrimental to the public prosperity. A nation composed of such as had given up their claims upon the privilege of thinking for themselves, of entertaining and promulgating their honest opinions, would be, after all, a nation of degraded beings. This being the case, it seems to follow, that no combination of men has the prerogative of tolerating the opinions of individuals. matters not, therefore, what are the opinions of the majority, what their respectability is, or how great their numbers are: they have no right to interfere with the opinions of others, and consequently, would be guilty of a flagrant violation of the spirit of our free institutions, werethey even to descant upon their liberality, or that of our government, in allowing the minority to enjoy the privilege of believing, and worshipping God, according to the dictates of conscience.

We return to our general inquiry. Since no man nor number of men has the right to interfere with, or tolerate, the opinions of others, the question is, whether all the inhabitants of this country are protected in the enjoyment of this inestima-

ble and inalienable right?

Were it necessary to enter into the detail of proof to show that all are not protected in the enjoyment of this right, we should find no want of facts to establish our position. We might mention a law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which, when enforced, compels persons, under certain circumstances, to support principles in which they do not believe, and preachers whose labors are thought to be useless, if not pernicious. Or we might mention the fact, that some of those in authority over us, have denied, to persons of good character, the privilege of giving their testimony in courts of justice, on account of certain peculiarities of sentiment. Or we might sustain ourselves in the position we have taken, by referring to that unjust public opinion which blindly attaches opprobrium to the honest sentiments of mankind. Or we might allude to the efforts of certain sects and religious parties in this country to monopolize public favor, and to destroy the characters and influence of those who do not subscribe to their articles of faith.

A desire to control the opinions and consciences of mankind has been cherished in all countries; and in all ages of the world. With us, owing to the general dissemination of knowledge, those measures which may be regarded as the concomitants of such a desire, have been successfully exposed and resisted. Still, the same domineering spirit exists, and is frequently manifested in attempts to render implicit faith in absurd and incomprehensible dogmas a passport to public favor. In this country we have no pope, nor inquisition, nor national creed; but we are not without our ecclesiastical dignitaries; we have assemblies, and synods, whose decisions cannot be questioned with impunity; and creeds which are considered next to infallible. And, that we may be reminded of the devices of the mother church, our ears are now and then sailuted with the petty thunders of excommunication.

We repeat; it is not now the question whether our minds are free, nor whether our opinions are entertained independent of any extraneous considerations, but it is, whether our persons, interests, and characters, are unaffected by the laws and usages of this country; whether, indeed, the citizens of republican America enjoy the liberty of entertaining, and expressing, their opinions, without exposing themselves to any

obloquy, any civil or religious disabilities; without bringing upon themselves any reproach, or subjecting themselves to any inconveniences. And to this inquiry we are constrained to give

an unqualified answer in the negative.

3. No community can enjoy religious liberty unless the conduct, principles, and feelings of a majority of the individuals composing it, are conformed to the standard of moral purity, uprightness, and integrity, which is furnished in the gos-

pel of Christa

Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people. Sin is the scourge of the world. It is that which debases the mind, and degrades and disgraces our nature; it is that which renders men blind to their true interests, regardless of their own rights, and unmindful of the rights and interests of others. Is America free? No, it is in bondage to sin. Thousands are at this moment the victims of intemperance, a vice which constitutes the foulest stigma upon our national character; profanity prevails in all ranks of society; religion is treated by many with marked contempt—by more with reprehensible indifference; and there is, it must be confessed, among us, a

fearful destitution of moral and political integrity.

Need we contend that a laxity of morals will have a direct tendency to deprive this great, and comparatively happy nation, of the blessing of religious liberty, when all stand ready to acknowledge that our only security for the perpetuation of civil liberty is the virtue of the mass of the people? There never can be a people secure in the enjoyment of civil, much less of religious liberty, so long as the rules of morality remain disregarded. The practice of iniquity, of itself, is a species of slavery to which no free born mind can submit, until it has ingloriously surrendered its highest prerogatives. But, in order to see the subject before us in its true light, we must trace the evil to its legitimate results. We must look at its tendency to undermine the foundation of every good institution, and to corrupt the very fountain of those principles which constitute our safeguard.

Whenever high toned moral principle shall have been abandoned by the generality of the people of this country, they will, as some now do, commit the keeping of their consciences, and rights, their prerogatives and interests, to immoral rulers. Let the restraints of morality, or, we add with emphasis, a deep and heart pervading sense of accountableness to the laws of

God, be once generally disregarded by those in authority over us, and we shall have little else to do but to attune our voices to the death song of religious liberty. And we have reason to fear, that our nation is becoming every day more exposed to this evil, by the increasing indifference of our fellow citizens to these momentous considerations. We see around us vice in all its forms. We may see its bloated visage and blood-shot eyes, at the corners of our streets; we may behold its wide spread desolations in all the varieties of human life and condition. have instances illustrative of its rayages in the decline of that exalted patriotism, and that ennobling devotedness to the defence of our institutions, which distinguished our forefathers; in the effeminacy and sickly sentimentality of the age; in the reckless disregard of the principles of honor and uprightness even among those who move in what are called the higher circles of society; and in the indifference with which the people at large regard these things. Nor can it be denied, that the spread of that infidelity which knows no God, and officiously trifles with the dearest and most sacred institutions of civilized man, is to be reckoned among the signs of the times which promise no good to the cause of religious liberty. As yet there is a redeeming principle in the breasts of those constituting the mass of the people; but God only knows how soon that principle may be uprooted from the hearts of our fellow citizens. the nation increases in wealth and numbers, we have reason to fear an increase of those vices and follies which will accelerate its decline in virtue, and bring upon us the evils which other republics have experienced before us; and, unless some means are resorted to, that shall exert a salutary influence over the passions, inclinations, and habits of the people, we shall continue to travel on in the downward road, until our country is involved in anarchy, and our religious privileges are lost past recovery.

We need not make our calculations from data furnished in gambling houses and grog shops; for these, though furnishing disgusting specimens of immorality and painful illustrations of the degradation of which human nature is susceptible, are by no means the worst, nor most alarming, evidences of our liability to fall the victims of our own folly. It is the deleterious influence of vice and folly when dressed out in the trappings of fashion, when connected with wealth, and refinement of manners; it is 'wickedness in high places,' that we ought most to fear. We have alms houses, and gaols, and state prisons, for the se-

curity of our interests against the encroachments of intemperance, idleness, and petty villanies; but, to the serious disadvantage of community, we have not yet devised methods of punishment for those, who, under the sanction of law, outrage the principles of justice; and, protected by an erroneous public opinion, trifle with the privileges of their fellow

beings, and tamper with the dearest rights of man.

It was the intention of the writer of this article, to enter into a somewhat minute examination of the causes which have prevented the extension of religious liberty in this country, and which are likely to operate to the serious disadvantage of the people, by depriving them of this blessing; but he is admonished that our limits will not admit of any considerable enlargement, and nothing more than a few general hints upon this topic will now be attempted. It must be added, however, that we are in danger of having our religious privileges abridged by neglecting to cultivate and exercise our mental powers. become the fashion of the times to think with the multitude. Combinations, both political and religious, have been formed for the express purpose, as we have reason to think, of producing results favorable to the interests of the promoters of them. Literary institutions have been established, and liberally endowed, for the same purpose. In these, both men and youth are taught, if not required, to think after a prescribed fashion. In one they are made to think by one set of rules: in another by another, and so on. This would be far less alarming, were it not that those who take the lead in this business of training the human mind, have the faculty of making the people believe, that the rules and creeds framed for their acceptance, are so worthy of confidence as that an examination of them is unnecessary. The tendency of such measures is, to lull the people into a sense of security, and to make them dream of liberty, while those who take the trouble to think for them are binding their minds to the car of a party.

We have no disposition to conceal the fact, that, in these general remarks, we mean to include those religious combinations with which this country abounds, whose influence, in directing public opinion, is almost unlimited, and whose means of abridging the privileges of our citizens are known to be immense. These associations have the ability to do a lasting injury to our institutions; and however good the real, or the ostensible motives of many belonging to them may be, it would

not be a difficult task to show that they promise no good to the cause of religious liberty. For it will readily occur to the reflecting mind, that but little benefit can be expected to reresult from wealthy and powerful associations, which are, to all intents and purposes, above the reach of individuals, and beyond the control of the civil authorities; nay more, which are accountable to none, save to those whose interests and popular-

ity they are calculated to promote.

If the object with those who have the management of these societies be, as they assure us it is, to send the Bible without note or comment to the destitute, and a knowledge of the truth to the ignorant, we find it not in our hearts to deny that their motives are good. But may it not be true, that dangerous, and even dishonest means may be resorted to, for the attainment of an end which is confessedly desirable? It is indubitably certain, that such may be the case, and we are strongly inclined to think that this has been the case, with more than one of these sectarian institutions. We are not prepared, perhaps, to examine, dispassionately, the claims and objects of missionary, tract, bible, education, and sunday school societies; they present themselves, it is confessed 'in such a questionable shape' that we fear to meddle with them, lest our suspicions get the better of our judgments. We have certain involuntary doubts concerning their utility, which neither our own reasoning, nor the arguments of their advocates have been able to remove. And we pass them over for the present, with the remark, that they are confessedly sectarian, yet they are denominated 'national' institutions; and, while they profess to be devoted to the interests of a suffering world, they are rendered subservient to the aggrandizement of those whose thirst after earthly things is an astounding proof that their conversation is not entirely in heaven.

Leaving the hundred and one of these institutions, we proceed to submit a few thoughts upon the tendency of the 'American Bible Society,' premising that what is true of this, is true, to a greater or less extent, of all its sister associations. We select this as the subject of our remarks on account of its being the most popular of them all, and because we are willing to abide by what shall appear to be the tendency of an institution whose

ostensible object is good.

The declared object of this society is, to supply the destitute with the scriptures; and who will pretend that this is not de-

sirable? But what are the means adopted to secure the attainment of this object? Subordinate societies are formed in every part of the country; agents are appointed, to solicit donations; there are presidents and vice presidents; recording and corresponding secretaries; treasurers, directors, &c. &c. In addition to this, costly buildings must be erected, as depositories. And how are these expenses to be met? How are these agents to be supported? They are supported, and these expenses are defrayed from the funds of the society; and those funds are obtained from the pockets of the people. But this is not all. The evil does not consist of a misapplication of the funds, so long as the institution remains as it is; nor in the manner of obtaining money from the people. The danger lies in the accumulation of large sums of money, in the exemption of their property from taxation, and in the absence of all accountability to the government. This renders the popularity of the institution dangerous, and affords good reasons for alarm. Could this powerful society be compelled to disgorge, at stated times, and for its declared purposes, its enormous wealth; could it be taught that the Lord's Treasury ought not to lie unimproved: could its depositories be turned into workshops, and its surplus funds be appropriated for the construction of railroads and canals, or for the support of poor widows, or the education of fatherless children, then the opposition it now has to contend with would cease, and cease forever.

But it is time that we inquire what bad effect this or any similar institution can have upon the religious affairs of the country? It will have this effect. It being a sectarian institution, it will send out, with its bibles, those who will explain them according to the views of its members. It will thus supply the want of 'notes and comments' by speaking agents, and commentators possessing the power of locomotion. And when the appointed time shall come, the enormous wealth of the society, placed as it is at the disposal of one class of people, may be brought to bear, in many different ways, upon the civil and religious interests of our country; and, by its misdirected influence, arm its votaries with a cross in one hand, and a sword in the other; and thus, in advancing the cause of God, destroy, or trample upon, the rights of his offspring. And it is surprising to see with what indifference a large majority of the people regard the operations of those whose every effort is devoted to some one of the popular religious parties of this country. This machinery of sectarism is made to operate upon all ages

and conditions. It may be seen at work in getting up excitements of the animal passions, in prostrating the intellectual faculties, in requiring an unqualified assent to incomprehensible dogmas, in operating upon the amiable sensibilities of females, in subjecting the lords of creation, like Sampson shorn of his locks, to their mild but dangerous authority, in training up the rising generation 'in the nurture and admonition of' religious partyism, and in directing those whose minds are susceptible of being made blindly acquiescent, to keep in fashion the sentiment, that none but the faithful are capable of managing their spiritual concerns. This state of things is alarming; and it is so because it evinces a disposition, on the part of not a few, to forego, in obedience to the dictates of the managers of sectarian institutions, the exercise of those high prerogatives which belong to freemen, and to submit to the guidance of those whose intentions may be good, but whose claim to moral or intellectual infallibility may be lawfully called in ques-

In view of all this, on comparing the present state of mankind with what their condition ought to be, especially in this country; recollecting that our religious privileges, few as they are, may be less, it becomes, to every reflecting mind, a most interesting inquiry, What shall be done, to remove the evils existing among us, to avert those to which we are exposed, and to secure the blessing of religious liberty to every human being within our borders? Our limits admit of but a brief

reply.

1. Let the blessings of education be extended to all conditions of the rising generation, as fast and as far, as may be prac-We do not shun the hazard of saying, that every youth in this country should be educated at the public expense. This should be a land of common schools, and our schools should be nurseries of sound sense, sound morality, and sound learning. Sectarism should be banished from them. Let this be done; let the young mind be taught to reason, and the young heart to feel, and our children will do more in extending and perpetuating religious liberty, than can be done by their fathers. Our higher literary institutions, as they are now conducted, are not advantageous to the interests of community at large; they are little more than nurseries of sectarism and aristocracy: and we are at a loss to decide which is most surprising, the assurance of those who ask, or the blindness of those who consent to give, out of the public treasury, funds for their support. As now managed, the wealthy are furnished with the means of giving their sons what is called a finished education; while our common schools are left to take care of themselves, or to obtain support from those who have already been taxed for the maintenance of colleges. We look for some improvement in these affairs, and we trust that we shall not look in vain

to the intelligence of the people, for a radical reform.

2. A just estimate of the advantages of religious liberty is indispensable to its preservation. If one privilege is dearer than another, that of worshipping God agreeably to the dictates of conscience is pre-eminently valuable. We would, therefore, that every American citizen could feel that religious liberty is his invaluable birthright; that no man or number of men has the right to call in question the soundness of his faith, nor the propriety of his devotions, so long as he does not trespass upon the rights, or disturb the devotions of others; and that he is accountable to God, and him alone, for his opinions.

In conclusion, we take the liberty to observe that if we would extend and perpetuate the blessing of religious liberty, we must beware of those, who, under a pretence of regard for the welfare of our souls in another world, would inculcate a disregard of our rights and privileges, interests, and enjoyments, in this. This observation is not intended for one particular denomination; but for all who would prostrate the mental faculties of mankind, or render a sacrifice of our rights and privileges here, subservient to the promotion of our happiness hereafter. From the influence of all such, let every free born soul withdraw itself; for that religion which admits not our claim upon the privilege of thinking for ourselves, deserves neither the attention, nor respect, of mankind.

This, then, is the conclusion at which we have arrived. Our country, though when compared with other nations it is free and happy, has not yet attained to that state of freedom which is desirable. Our manners, customs, laws, literary institutions, and modes of thinking, are yet tinctured with that which is hostile to our true interests and decidedly prejudicial to our advancement in refinement and happiness. We are exposed to the arts of designing sectaries. And the measurably enlightened citizens of America have yet a great and important work to perform; a work on the accomplishment of which depends the welfare of our own country, and the fate of a degra-

ded and suffering world.

ART. XII.

The influence of Sectarism upon the Literary and Scientific Institutions of our Country-considered in reference to the expediency of establishing Schools and Seminaries to be exclusively under the control of Universalists.

WE know not of any subject of more engrossing interest than that, the outlines of which, are given in the title of this article. Certain we are, that there is none which more deserves-nay, demands the attention of Universalists. For, to say nothing of the anxiety we feel, or ought to feel, on the account of others, or on account of the public at large, we need not to be told that our own welfare, to a certain extent, and that of our children, to an extent that exceeds all calculation, depends upon the measures which we, in our collective capacity, may

In thus speaking of the importance which we humbly presume to attach to the proceedings of our own denomination, we are well aware of the fact, that we are exposing ourselves to the taunts and sneers of cotemporary sects;especially of those whose Doctors and Professors are, to human appearance, securely nestled in the leading Literary Institutions of our country. We may be told, that, as yet, our influence is nothing in the Republic of Letters,that we have no literary institutions under our exclusive control; and that it is for this reason that we ought not to be so presumptuous as to set up our claims to the right, either of interfering with those already established, or of establishing others.

It is, we ingenuously confess, but too true, that our influence in conducting these schools and seminaries, has, hitherto, been next to nothing; and also, that, as a denomination, we have no such institution under our control, or subject to our management. But does it necessarily follow that we ought to remain silent; or that we cannot obtain, and exert some influence in these affairs? Because we have been inactive, must we remain so? We presume not.

That we have not had our share of influence in conducting the schools and seminaries of this country, has been because our number was too small, to admit of withdrawing from the field of theological controversy the requisite amount of talent, without endangering the welfare of principles of paramount importance. The reason why we do not now exert such influence, is because we are not aware of our numerical strength, and have not brought ourselves to a due sense of the responsibility that devolves upon In respect to numbers, we stand higher than some denominations which have assumed the management of our schools and colleges. Nor are we willing to confess ourselves inferior to them in regard to mental strength, integrity of character, or any of the qualifications which are requisite for the faithful and successful management of useful literary institutions. We are not without men of sterling talent, and high literary attainments, united with much good sense and elevated sentiment-models of good morals and good manners; in conformity to whose examples we might safely mould the minds and morals of our youth. Still, we have been "slow of heart to believe" that our sons could be educated, short of sending them to institutions confessedly under sectarian influence, and at which nothing less than a miracle could be efficacious in saving them from the contaminating effects of doctrines not merely worthless, but actually pernicious.

But the time has come when Universalists begin to feel the weight of the responsibility that devolves upon them. There are among us not a few who have become thoroughly convinced that some measures should be forthwith adopted, whereby our own children, and, if possible, the children of others who may be disposed to avail themselves of the contemplated improvement, may be saved from the evils to which they have been, and still are exposed. The well-founded conviction that some step of this kind ought now to be taken, is, we have reason to believe, rapidly extending throughout our borders; and, with a view of contributing what little we can in aid of any measures which our brethren in their wisdom may think proper to adopt, we shall submit a few thoughts on this subject to their inspection, not without the hope of their being at

least harmless, and perhaps conducive to a concentration of effort in a good undertaking.

We have, thus far, gone upon the presumption that our schools and seminaries are under sectarian influence. Do we need proof to convince us that they are so? Where do we discover any thing that is calculated to convince the reflecting mind that they are not? What are our colleges, but so many nurseries of sectarism and aristocracy? Is it replied that they are also nurseries of learning? Even that learning, we aver, is tinctured with the errors of former ages, and so interwoven with sectarian dogmas, that the knowledge which is said to be power, becomes, in too many instances, an incumbrance upon the mass of mind. And where is the academy that has not its clerical dictator or superintendent? We know of none which are exempt from these impediments. Nor does the evil stop here. Our common schools, as far as our information extends, are, almost without an exception, in some degree in the same situation. The shorter catechism may have been discarded, but the spirit of its dogmas may still be inculcated in some less disgusting, but no less mischievous form. We have still the essence of those essentials retained in the books which are put into the hands of our children, and carefully instilled into their minds under the garb of morality. And besides all this, unwearied efforts are made to indoctrinate the minds of the rising generation, in Sabbath schools. So that there is but a small chance of our being able to give our children an education that shall qualify them for any respectable situation in society, without having their minds contaminated with doctrines and traditionary legends which we most conscientiously detest.

Let the anxious Universalist parent seriously ask himself where he can educate his child without incurring the above mentioned risk. He will soon find, that, although he lives in a country reputed free,—has a voice in all affairs of public interest—and rights in common with his fellow citizens, he has not the privilege of preparing his son for either of the learned professions, or his daughter to move in any sphere above mediocrity, without exposing them to the evils alluded to. He will find that what cannot be accomplished by terror, will be brought about by management—by persuasion, perhaps, or by bringing to bear upon

their minds and feelings a sense of the unpopularity of any other sentiments than those which enlightened minds

have long since discarded.

To all this it may be replied, that there are literary institutions which are under the control of Unitarians, and we may be politely told that they are eminently liberal, and have repeatedly abjured the abominations of orthodoxy. But we have yet to learn that their liberality consists of any thing else but professions. And we must be pardoned for expressing the opinion, (for it is an honest one,) that their policy, their management,-to call it by no other name, is not the less dangerous to the minds and morals of our youth, than the undisguised, though pernicious, principles of the orthodox. There is but little to choose between bad principles, and no principles at all. hardly know which to prefer-to have our youth enter upon the stage of action with their minds enfeebled by the discipline of terror, or impressed with the idea that all principles may be sacrificed for the attainment of popular applause. If there be any choice, the former would be preferred; for there is a chance for the mind to acquire the power to throw off the shackles of groundless fear; but when it becomes a settled conviction of the mind that whatever is popular is right, there is but little hope that intercourse with the world will lead to any amendment.

Let it be asked—how we would have our children educated, and what we would have them to be? We would have them so educated that their minds should be freeuntrammeled by any theological dogmas. We would have them prepared to investigate, to the bottom, all opinions, -not excepting those of their fathers. And we would have them become, what very few now are, -so potent have been our prejudices of education,—the devoted servants of truth. We would have them respect principle, not popularity; truth, and not what has been called by that name; morality, and not the sickening dogmas of a mongrel theology. We would have them liberal, but not licentious; religious, but not bigoted; pious, but not superstitious; learned, but not pedantic; refined, but possessed of that manly hardihood which should incline them to encounter, and enable them to overcome, every error that

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should fall in their way.

After what has been said we need not labor to convince the intelligent reader that something needs be done, that we may have opportunities to educate our youth in a manner better suited to the age in which we live, and that they may be prepared to enter the field of improvement, better qualified for the work of meliorating the condition of mankind than any of the reformers of the present day. We flatter ourselves that the minds of our readers are convinced that not only something, but much must be done for the attainment of this object. Who, then, will do that something? Who have the disposition, and the ability, to devise the plan, and carry into execution the measures, which may be found necessary for effecting the desired reform? Who but

the Universalists of this country?

We think it would be by no means a difficult task, to show that the leaders of the dominant religious sects in this country are interested in the perpetuation of those errors which enslave and degrade the human mind. For the Orthodox to pretend that their principles can stand the test of enlightened reason, would be to give up the only ground on which they can sustain themselves. And, such is the variety of sentiment, on subjects of vital importance, among those denominated Unitarians, that it would be next to madness for them to contend that all their opinions are right. And hence, while the former deprecate impartial inquiry, and stigmatize that which intuitively suspects the infallibility of their creed, with the epithet, carnal reason, the latter would have the inquisitive mind hoodwinked with a refined sentimentality, and cautioned, by its love of pre-eminence, to regard as unimportant whatever may become a bone of contention. In pursuance of their measures they have attached much consequence to the doctrine from which they borrow their name; while, as regards the question whether God will save, damn, or annihilate his children, they affect great indifference, and, we are sorry to say, manifest a complacency which comports badly with their pretended regard for the salvation of mankind. To look to persons of this description for assistance in giving our youth what we shall take the liberty to denominate an impartial education, would be the height of presumption. They cannot assist us without endangering their respective systems, if systems they have,

and their popularity, which there may be no crime in

supposing is as dear to them as their creeds.

We need not here stop to settle the question whether our religious views are right or wrong; it is sufficient for our purpose to know that we think they are correct; and that we desire to have our children so educated, as that their minds shall not be prejudiced against them. Nor is this all. Having experienced the beneficial influences of the faith we profess, and believing that others would realize the like benefits from cherishing it, we would not disguise the fact, that it would afford us great satisfaction to have our children trained up in the love of it. In this we are not singu-Others entertain similar desires. We cheerfully accord to them the right to do so. And, as members of a community made up of individuals of every variety of religious and moral sentiment, we are willing to surrender as many of our personal rights, as others differing with us in sentiment, may feel disposed to surrender of theirs; provided that by so doing the general welfare can be promoted. But there is neither reason nor justice in our being required to relinquish our claims upon the common privileges of citizenship without any equivalent. And all demands of this kind are peculiarly aggravating when made by persons who assume to be our judges in spiritual matters, and manifest no disposition to reward us for our exemplary patience, under the burdens and privations they have all along imposed upon us. The time has come when further endurance will be criminal-when it no longer becomes us to submit to the degradation of having the benefits of education tendered to our youth, so encumbered with the divinity of former ages as to be but little more useful than none. Our grievances must, and will be redressed. But it is the settled conviction of our mind, that no class of men in this community will voluntarily do this for us—we must do it for ourselves, or it will not be done. Nor can we bring ourselves to believe that anything is wanted to qualify us, in our collective capacity, for the undertaking before us, but the disposition to set ourselves about it. When once enlisted in so good a cause, we should find sufficient incentives to exertion, and encouragements to perseverance, in the success that would attend every well-directed effort.

But the fact ought not to be concealed that there are difficulties in our way neither few nor small. There are difficulties without, and difficulties within our borders. We shall have to encounter the prejudices of many, the policy of some, and the fears of such as honestly believe our sentiments are erroneous. And besides all this, we shall have to contend with that mighty bug-bear of this republican land, called "all the learning, and all the respectability in the country." But we venture to predict, that all this formidable array of opposition will yield as soon as those composing our denomination shall have concentrated their strength, and made one effort for the attainment of

the laudable object in view.

What do we want? We want schools and seminaries of learning in which our children may be educated without having their minds or morals contaminated either with the creeds or the sectarian schemes of the other denominations. Nothing short of this will satisfy us—nothing short of this will satisfy our just claims. We ask not for the honors, nor the offices of those who now occupy the higher literary stations. We only ask them to do us justice. We seek not for an opportunity to do by them as they have long done by us-we will not violate any rules which we may lay down for their observance. We stand on open ground, and are ready to come to an agreement, by which the rights of both parties, or all parties, if there be more than two, shall be duly respected. But if no such compromise can be made, our only alternative will be to adopt such measures as shall be thought best, for the attainment of our object, without regard to the consequences which the refusal of our opponents may bring upon themselves.

In the foregoing observations we feel assured that we have expressed the sentiments of our more intelligent brethren, both as regards the object we have in view, and the necessity of doing something, without delay, for its attainment. But we have reasons for being apprehensive, that our views may not altogether accord with those of some, whose opinions we very highly respect, as regards the means to be used, and the measures to be adopted, to bring about the improvement desired. Far be it from us to throw any obstacles in the way of those who are engaged in making exertions to remove the evils of which we com-

plain; still, we may venture to express our fears that their well-meant endeavors will fail of success; and even that should they succeed, to the extent of their anticipations, the work upon which they have entered with so commendable a zeal, will be but half accomplished. Our views will

be better understood from what follows.

The difficulty which we are desirous of removing, exists, as we have seen, in almost every literary institution and school in this country. It consists of the influence of sectarism in disciplining the minds, and forming the moral characters of youth. This is the evil we complain of—this is the evil which we desire to remove. It is a matter of comparatively little importance with us what kind of sectarian principles are taught in our schools and seminaries, so long as it is evident that none can be taught in them without doing violence to the honest opinions of some whose children may be sent to them. We fearlessly affirm that the introduction of the dogmas of any sect, into schools, where children of different denominations attend, or have a right to attend, is a violation of the letter and spirit of our political compact. To this remark we make no exception. We care not what the numerical strength of any party may be; be it ever so great, they have no right to inculcate their views so long as there remains one to dissent from them. All our public schools are the property of the public; and they should be so many sanctuaries to which children may be sent, as to a place of safety from the theological tempest, until their minds shall have gained sufficient strength to withstand the "winds of doctrine" which now agitate, and are likely to agitate this free and inquiring community. We make no distinction, therefore, in the discussion of this subject, between Calvinism, Arminianism, Unitarianism, or Universalism-neither of them can be introduced into our public schools with more propriety than another-our schools should be purged and protected from the influence of them all.

Entertaining these views of this subject, however dear may be our own peculiar sentiments, we cannot advocate their introduction into our literary institutions. Next to the evil of which we are now complaining, should we deprecate a thing of that kind. We find it not in our hearts to inflict upon others the miseries which we have so long endured.

We desire not to retaliate. We would much rather summon to our aid the spirit of philanthropy, and do what we can to rid community of the abuses of which we speak, than to entail them upon posterity with the addition of another set of opinions. Not that we object to their being disseminated, or to their being advocated and sustained; but to their being sustained in that unlawful manner.

Admitting, then, for the sake of the argument, that we could, in a short time, obtain the ascendancy, so as to have it in our power to remodel our literary institutions, would it be desirable to introduce into them the views and principles peculiar to our denomination? By no means. We would have the public think better of us, than to suppose us capable of doing so base a thing. We might, it is true, be justified on the principle of retaliation, in doing so; but we disclaim all feelings of that sort. We would do by others, not as they have done, but as we would have them do by us. We trust they will never the reverted their research the say of us

that we have, in this respect, copied their example.

Again: The same objections that lie against the introduction of our peculiar principles into existing literary institutions, may be urged against establishing new seminaries in which they shall predominate. If it is an evil to have one sectarian school, it is a much greater to have one hundred; and should they be multiplied indefinitely, the evil would be increased, not diminished. Why? Because, the principle upon which we should go would be bad, and just as bad in one case as in another. Or, to use a homely expression, a thousand wrongs will never make one right. True, there is some plausibility in the idea of counteracting the pernicious influence of one sectarian institution, by establishing another. But it will not, we apprehend, appear as well in practice as in theory. Checks and balances may do well enough in cases where they can be made to operate harmoniously, and to some desirable result; but where their tendency is to produce jargon and tumult, the less we have of them the better. This is especially true of the case in hand. The increase of sectarian schools, of opposite characters, will but add fuel to the fire already kindled. It will but sharpen the weapons of theological controversy, while at the same time it will lessen the chances for a dispassionate examination of the matter in debate.

It is for these reasons, that, while we dare not put our own judgment in respect to these things upon an equality with the wisdom and experience of those who seem to have come to a different conclusion, we cannot but doubt the utility of some measures which they have recommended. We allude to the apparent interest which has been taken, in different parts of the country, in measures for the establishment of literary institutions, to be under the exclusive control of Universalists. If it is intended that the contemplated seminaries shall be kept free from sectarism; if our brethren, seeing and feeling the evils which have been pointed out, have resolved to establish, and become so far the protectors of these institutions, as to preserve them from those evils; then, it is confessed that we cannot sufficiently commend their zeal and philanthropy. Not having sufficient information to be justified in either commending or disapproving the measures they have adopted, and presuming that their motives are good, we cannot do less than call the attention of our brethren generally to the appeal which has been made to their generosity, and to all such arguments and facts as may be submitted for public consideration, in regard to those undertakings. Of one thing we cannot doubt. It is both expedient and necessary, for the denomination of Universalists to lose no time in establishing a theological school, where those who contemplate entering the ministry may pursue the requisite studies. This we have a right to do, and the exigencies of the times call loudly upon us, to "be up and doing." But, as this is foreign to to the subject we are upon, we leave it for others to dis-CUSS.

It would seem, then, that there are but two ways in which we can expect to remove the evil of which we complain. One is, by establishing and controlling new literary institutions; the other is, by lending what aid we can in trying to drive sectarism from those already established. We do not hesitate to declare it as our opinion that the latter is to be preferred. Our reasons are as follows—

In the first place; this is the only way in which the evil can be corrected. We complain of the influence of sectarism in our schools and colleges. We know it is an infringement upon the rights of many. We shall never be satisfied

until the evil is removed. How shall we remove it? Cer-

tainly not by indignantly withdrawing our children and abandoning those schools which were established as much for our benefit as for that of others. This course, it is true, might save our children from the influence we deprecate, and ourselves from the mortification of having them exposed to an imposition of that sort; but it would rather aggravate than cure the evil. And we are much mistaken if such a course would not be the very result which our opponents desire to witness. They have attempted to drive us from other privileges of citizenship; they have publicly said that our sentiments ought to be regarded as a disqualification for office; and now, if they can succeed in making us withdraw from the controversy in relation to the case in hand, and relinquish our privileges in the schools and seminaries of the country, they will be gratified exceedingly. Then they will have an opportunity to entail upon posterity the evil in question, and there will be none "to molest, or make them afraid." So that nothing will ever correct this evil, but a concentration of effort on our part, directed to the purification of old, rather than to the establishing of new institutions.

And, secondly; admitting that we could, without much difficulty, succeed in establishing schools and seminaries of our own, and thereby save our youth from the deleterious influence of error; it would still be a serious question whether we should, in so doing, discharge the duties which devolve upon us as citizens of a free country. We ought to aim higher than that. So long as we have a share of responsibility resting upon us, we are bound to be faithful, not only to ourselves, but to others. Patriotism, morality, religion—all require that we should do something for the public good.

And, besides all this, our only security lies in the purity of our institutions generally. If we establish schools of our own, they must for a long time be few in comparison with the multitude of others. Our influence might be something, but it would be but as a drop in the bucket when placed by the side of that which would be arrayed against us. Hence, if we would bring about the desired reform, we must enter the field where the forces of our enemies are encamped, and if necessary assail them in their entrenchments. With-

drawing from the contest, will but embolden the adversary, and endanger the few rights and privileges now enjoyed.

And, again: In several States there are funds appropriated to purposes of this kind, and in others money is raised by tax for the support of schools, and it would be impolitic in us to abandon these means, to a share of which we are entitled, merely because our religious opponents happen to be a majority. There may be something noble in the act of voluntarily relinquishing a claim of this sort, rather than to contend about it; still, it may be no less becoming in us, to insist upon having what belongs to ourselves. We admire the principle laid down by the Saviour, which requires that, when a man compels us to go with him one mile, we should go with him twain; but we are opposed to going alone a step for the gratification of those who will neither walk with us, nor let us walk with them. We are, therefore, for keeping our hold upon the funds appropriated for the maintenance of schools, so long as there shall be the least prospect of our being able to render them conducive to the correct ed-

ucation of the youth of our country.

To the foregoing might be added many other reasons for preferring the course herein recommended; among which, are the expense which must necessarily be incurred in establishing schools of our own; the consequent embarrassments we should have to encounter; and, the delay which would be occasioned by the obstacles thrown in our way. And, to all these may be added the fact, that the more enlightened members of society are so tired of all sectarian plans, that it will be difficult to enlist them in any undertaking of that kind And, as it becomes us to seize upon every favorable circumstance, and improve every event, for the attainment of our object, we should avail ourselves of the help of all high-minded and liberal men, as far as we can without surrendering our independence, or making a sacrifice of our principles. By falling in with the current of popular feeling, which is now setting strongly against sectarian monopoly, we shall be borne triumphantly through all difficulties to the desired result; whereas, by adopting the other plan, we shall expose ourselves to the charge of having embarked in an undertaking, which, though of a somewhat different character, would be classed with the family of those which ought to be exterminated.

It becomes, then, an inquiry of the first importance, what can be done towards ridding our schools, seminaries, and colleges of the blighting influence of sectarism? Our re-

ply must be brief.

In the first place, let every liberal man do his duty in attending to the common schools in the town or neighborhood where he resides. The laws of this Commonwealth, and we believe of many, if not all, the other States, provide that no dogmas peculiar to any sect shall be taught in our public schools. Let every intelligent parent avail himself of this protection. Let him see to it, that the instructer does not inculcate sectarian principles in the minds of those placed under his charge. If he trespass upon the rules which law, reason, and common sense prescribe, let him be admonished; if refractory, let such measures be taken as are justifiable to effect his removal from a station his conduct has disgraced. See to it, that no person is permitted to enter the doors of the school room with a message of wrath, or the tidings of damnation. And if the law does not furnish this protection, let measures be adopted to alter it, that it may. Much may be done in this way towards effecting the desired improvement.

In the second place, let a decided stand be taken against those sectarian academies with which the country abounds. Universalists and others of liberal views have not done their duty in regard to these engines of designing men. They have too often sent their sons and daughters to them, while other institutions, far more deserving of patronage, or at any rate less hurtful to the morals of community, have languished for the want of support. The apathy which has pervaded the minds of the liberal portion of society in respect to these things, has been truly unaccountable. They have remained inactive while surrounded with these glaring abuses. But when they resolve upon doing their duty, we may calculate upon a speedy redress of the

grievance.

And, thirdly, let an enlightened community turn their attention to our colleges and universities. It is high time that the public should know how these institutions are managed—whether they are to be devoted to the interests of one party, or to the interests of the people—whether they are so many nuisances, or so many blessings to our country.

The spirit of the age demands that learning should be stripped of its mystery, and its true character known by the

mass of the people.

By thus attending to these things much may be done. Though confessedly in the minority, by throwing our influence into the scale in favor of correct principles, we may soon bring about the desired result. Let us, as a denomination, aim high, and persevere even to the end. Let there be no compromise with error and imposition. Let us claim, and do what we can to obtain, our just rights; and never, till we have made the attempt, and have failed, let us be discouraged.

L. S. E.

ART. XIII.

A Sermon.

The following Sermon was delivered before the general Convention of Universalists at Barry, Vt. September, 1831; also in the second Universalist meeting in Boston, on the morning of the first Sabbath in the following October; but as it was not then committed to writing it was not convenient to provide the copy, without some variations from what it was as delivered extempore.

JOB XXXVI: 2. "Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak, on God's behalf."

Should you hear the character of a ruler, who holds a high and responsible office in government, misrepresented and treated with abuse, though you might have no personal acquaintance with such person, nor any peculiar friendship for him, if you had satisfactory evidence that what was stated unfavorable to the character of this ruler was altogether false, and if you were in possession of sufficient proof to support the good reputation of the injured man, you would think yourselves fully justified in craving an indulgence similar to the one asked in our text. You might, with unquestionable propriety, say to the abuser of a good character, Suffer us a little, and we will shew thee that something may

be offered in behalf of the person thou hast traduced.' You would feel fully entitled to the privilege of disproving erroneous representations, and also of setting forth such known facts as would reflect honor on the character which

your duty would impel you to defend.

In a circle of influential persons, should one hear unkind and false aspersions profusely dealt out against a warm, intimate and honorable friend, would it not be difficult for him wholly to hold his peace? Would he not be fully justified in claiming indulgence, while he might offer something in behalf of his injured friend? But suppose this injured friend was a tender, kind, and provident father, would it well become the child, knowing the entire falsity of all the reproach which had reached his ears, and being in possession of ample proof that the beloved father was justly entitled to honorable respect, to be silent on such an occasion? Might he not, with undoubted propriety, say to his father's calumniators, suffer me a little and I will show you that it belongs to me to speak in behalf of the subject of your abuse?

If the foregoing queries do not mislead us in relation to our rights and our duty, it must be granted that we have a right to vindicate the character of our heavenly Father against all the unfavorable representations which men have invented and reported concerning his divine economy, and that it is our duty so to do. We shall therefore proceed,

1st, To set forth what false doctrines have ascribed to

the Creator.

2dly, To show that the character of God, thus represented, in place of being an object of devotion and love, is, to

the last degree, horrible and revolting. And

3dly, To say something in God's behalf, which will not only disprove their reproachful misrepresentations which have been incorporated into the creeds of men, but commend the divine character as worthy of our highest adoration,

love and praise.

In bringing into view what the doctrines of men have ascribed to our Creator, we shall pay but little regard to any thing like consistency, as those doctrines are extremely destitute of such a quality. We deem it unnecessary, also, to occupy time by quotations from creeds, as what we are about to lay before the hearer will consist of nothing which

is not generally known to belong to the doctrine of the

1. It is believed, and taught by learned doctors, that the Creator, before he brought into existence either angels or men, comprehended, in his perfect knowledge, all beings and things which he should ever create, and all events and circumstances which would ever occur in relation to all his works, both in time and in eternity; and that from all eternity he

ordained whatsoever comes to pass.

2. According to what we learn by comparing certain items of belief, it seems that the first of the works of God was a place which the doctors call hell. This place the Creator prepared as a prison of excruciating torment, and furnished it with all possible means for inflicting sensible pain and the most lively anguish which his infinite skill could invent, and his infinite displeasure and wrath could inflict. This bottomless pit of wo, this prison of horror, the allwise and powerful Creator so fixed and established that it must remain in undiminished flames eternally, or

as long as the Creator shall exist.

3. Having completed this beginning of his creation, it is believed and taught that the Creator brought into existence an innumerable host of spiritual beings, called angels. These angels were created in a state of spotless purity, and moral holiness, with moral powers and mental capacities far exceeding those of mankind. Some of these angels the Creator designed before he gave them existence, should remain in a holy, happy state forever and enjoy his favor; but others of the same constitution, of the same wonderful powers, he foreordained unto everlasting wrath in the prison of hell; that by their endless unspeakable sufferings they might largely contribute to the glory of the Creator.

4. That the angels, whom the Creator predestinated to endless torments, might suffer according to strict justice, it is believed that the Creator furnished them with a law, the penalty for disobeying which was the everlasting pains of hell. This law, in order to effect the purposes of its author, was so constructed, in relation to those angels, that it was sure to be disobeyed. The Creator knew exactly how to weigh the moral powers of his creatures, and how to construct his law, so that the transgression which he designed, could not fail of being produced. According to

these determinations and means, the rebellion of angels took place, when the Almighty, in that holy wrath and just indignation, which were now, according to his own plans, raised to a flame, hurled these unhappy victims of his vengeance to the dismal shades of everlasting wo. As it is contended that the angels who sinned were immediately sent to hell, it appears evident that this prison was in readiness to receive them; by which also it appears that it was before created and furnished with its apparatus of torture. With hell in full operation, and the angels, who have become devils, being in complete torment, as was planned by the

Creator, the faith of the doctors goes on,

5. To represent the creation of our world, and also of man. And as it was foreordained by the Creator that some of the human race should be forever happy with those angels who remain in holiness and bliss, and that others should forever suffer the pains of hell with fallen angels, so the Creator contrived a law for man, and the means which should, without fail, bring about his transgression. To make sure of these ends and purposes, the Creator placed man in the garden of Eden, gave him woman for a help meet, and a law which he knew he would transgress, by means which he had before provided. The penalty of this law was eternal misery in hell. The means which God provided, by which man's transgression was effected, was a most subtle temptation, suggested by the great prince of the fallen angels, called the devil, or Satan. This subtle enemy of God and man, as he is called, the Creator permitted to visit the garden of Eden, and in the form of a serpent, to persuade and beguile the woman into transgression. This transgression the doctors call the fall of man. They say, "By the fall all mankind lost communion with God; fell under his wrath and curse; and were made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever!" According to this doctrine, the Creator contrived quite a different plan for the purpose of tormenting some of the human race in hell forever, from that by which he brought about the endless misery of fallen angels. The divine plan respecting the angels, required the transgression of those only who were predestinated unto misery; but in relation to man, it embraced the sinfulness of the whole, of those who were designed for happiness, as well as of those who were ordained to endless wo. In order to constitute all mankind sinners, the Creator appointed our first parents as the head and representatives of all their posterity, and thereby involved all men in the penalty of Adam's transgression. The reason why those of the human family, who were foreordained unto everlasting life, were involved in the penalty of Adam's transgression, was because the Creator, from all eternity, had purposed to redeem them from their just deserts of endless condemnation, by the propinitatory sufferings of the

second person in the Holy Trinity. And therefore,

6. Our doctors believe and teach that the Creator sent his son into the world to suffer and die, the just for the unjust, that he might, through his mediation, send forth the proclamation of the gospel of life and salvation, on the condition of repentance of sin, and faith in the merits of the Redeemer. But at the same time, having so ordered all things respecting this scheme of salvation, that no one can possibly repent of sin and believe in Christ without the special assistance of his irresistible grace, the Creator designedly withholds this assistance from all such as he foreordained to endless wo. With all these arrangements in successful operation, God is constantly preparing his favorites for endless felicity, and taking them to glory as fast as they put off this tabernacle of flesh and blood; and as constantly sending the rest of mankind, as vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction, to inherit the miseries to which they were ordained from all eternity, as fast as they pass out of this mortal state.

7. The better to secure the object of man's final condemnation, by rendering the miserable victims of relentless wrath sufficiently sinful in the present state, the Creator has so constituted man in relation to the divine requirements, that pleasure and enjoyment are here connected with disobedience; and a life of trouble, of gloom, and even of suffering, is united with piety and that true religion which alone is acceptable to God. Also, for the promotion of the same purpose, the punishment of sin is reserved for the future, eternal state; and the rewards of virtue likewise.

8. That he may finally make an open display of his vindictive justice in the endless misery of some, and of the riches of his goodness in the eternal happiness of others, God has appointed a day of general judgment, at which time, and on which awful and solemn occasion, all who

shall have been sent to hell, and all who shall have been received to heaven, together with all who shall at the end of the world be found on the earth, will be called to the bar of God for adjudication. Then will the judgment proceed, and all mankind will be impartially judged according to their moral characters. All who have been regenerated by the operations of irresistible grace, will receive the plaudit of the judge, and be welcomed to the mansions of everlasting life and glory. But all those who shall be found in the state of nature, in which they were born into this world, and under the reigning power of that sin which the Creator contrived, by means of the tempter, to bring upon them, will hear the awful sentence, "Depart, ye workers of iniquity, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

In presenting the hearer with the preceding statements, we have endeavored to guard against any false coloring that could in the least represent any part of the system more exceptionable than it really is. And we feel quite confident that no part of what is contained in these statements is without evident support from the catechisms which have been furnished the church by her doctors, and the constant theme of preaching to which people are in the habit of listening.

As was proposed, we shall now proceed to show that the character of God, thus represented, in place of being an object of devotion and love, is, to the last degree, horrible

and revolting.

1. To design and plan an infinite evil, must be allowed to indicate a mind and disposition perfectly opposed to goodness. This mind and disposition are clearly manifested in creating the hell in which the doctors believe, and which they hold up for the purpose of terrifying the human mind. For a moment let us coolly examine the merits of this awful subject. Let no false piety or slavish fear deter us from approaching this hideous idol. If the true God be such a being as he is represented, we are in no danger of incurring his displeasure; for this is impossible, as all the displeasure which will ever be exerted to inflict misery on either angels or men, existed in him before he created either. But if the true God is not such a being, if his very nature

is love and goodness, it must be pleasing to him, for his intellectual creatures to investigate all that is calculated to represent him unlovely, that we may thereby be delivered from injurious error concerning him. Without fear then we approach this subject, and ask this god, who created this hell, what motive he had in making it? Will he answer, that he foresaw that his creatures would sin against him, and that he created this hell that it might be ready to receive and to torment the wicked? We then ask him why he was disposed to bring those that lay in unconscious nonexistence, into being, knowing their final end? Here we come to a fair result. He designed their misery; and therefore provided for the same. But here comes a doctor, who has been amply taught the art of defending the conduct of this god. He says that his god acted on principles of perfect equity and justice towards those who are to suffer forever in hell, for he gave them a good and holy law, and would not have thus tormented them had they not transgressed. But we ask this Rev. doctor if he has forgotten that his creed says that his god foreordained whatsoever comes to pass? The fact is, his god foreordained the very sin which he determined to punish in hell forever. The doctor replies, that god left his creatures to the freedom of their will, and therefore the blame is on the creature and not on the Creator. But we again ask, whether this god did not know the consequence of that freedom of will which he allowed his creatures, and whether he did not foreordain such consequence? By these queries it is evident that the whole scheme, in all its parts, was the contrivance of this god. And it moreover appears that every attempt which is made to keep the horrid deformity of these most malevolent designs out of sight, and to pretend that the torments of this hell are a just retribution for offences against law, are efforts of vile hypocrisy.

2. If it be argued, in defence of the divine character, that as he, from all eternity, designed the everlasting happiness of some angels and some men, it ought to be allowed in support of his goodness; and that he is worthy of all praise, love and adoration for his purposes of goodness towards the vessels of his mercy, we in turn reply, that this argument defeats its own purpose; for if it be contended that the Creator is worthy of praise for creating with the intention of making his creatures happy, it is a direct acknowl-

edgment that if he creates, with a design to make his creatures miserable, he deserves the reverse of praise. It is worthy also of due consideration, that if the Creator had designed all his rational creatures for misery, and had rendered their torments as intense as our doctors represent those of hell, no creature in the universe would ever have known that a better state could have been produced. But as it is allowed that the Creator has wisdom and power sufficient to create and make his creatures forever happy, it affords clear argument against the right to make them miserable. This scheme of making some angels and some men forever glorious and happy, and others forever miserable, represents its author possessed of infinite partiality; a character certainly unworthy of respect, much more of praise.

3. Among those traits of character which render men offensive to each other, that of insincerity is not the least odious; and it gives us no small pain that we are compelled to say, that our christian doctors have represented our heavenly Father as acting such a part in regard to both angels and men. After having predestinated them to endure the torments of hell forever, he brought them into existence. And without divulging the secret of his purpose in making them forever miserable, gave them laws which he designed they should trangress, and which he knew they would transgress, of which facts he kept them ignorant, making them believe, all the time, that it was in their power to obey, and enacted the penalty of endless torment in hell as a retribution for their transgression. Thus these doctors represent our Creator as being the contriver and author of those offences which he punishes with unmerciful severity to all eternity. Was insincerity ever more apparent, or did it ever wear an aspect more detestable?

4. Who would undertake to justify the conduct of the divine Being, as represented by the doctors of the church, in relation to the effects of virtue and vice in the present state? From them we learn that our Creator has so constituted us, that our enjoyments in this life are to be found in the path of transgression; while irksome toils and dire afflictions lie in the way of our duty. To this calculation they add that of fixing the punishment of sin in a future world, all out of sight, so that it can exert no restraint on the creature, who is in pursuit of present happiness; also that of

placing the rewards of virtue equally remote and out of sight, that they can exert no influence in drawing men from the flowery paths of sin and enjoyment, into the gloomy, thorny ways of virtue and misery. We allow that our doctors are rather cautious in using direct terms to connect virtue and misery, in the present life, and vice and happiness; but that their doctrine does this, is undeniable, and all their abundant arguments to prove a future state of retribution, are founded on such a supposition. In fact, they do assert this doctrine most plainly, as often as they inform us, that if it were not for a future state of punishment, they would run greedily into every nameable vice, and indulge in all the pleasures of sin. They do also assert this doctrine as often as they contend that the belief that virtue is fully recompensed, and sin adequately punished in this state, is of licentious tendency. If such doctrine be consistent with the economy of the divine Being; if his scheme be of such a nature, to us it seems difficult to imagine a character less lovely, or less deserving our devotion.

5. The tragical scene of what the doctors call the day of judgment, seems to cap the climax, and give the finishing stroke to the horrible character, which they ascribe to

the Creator.

After souls shall have been weltering in the flames of hell for ages, to which torment they were forever doomed before they existed; and after the favorites of heaven shall, for ages, have enjoyed the felicity to which they were ordained before they were brought into being, they are to be raised from the dead, and arraigned at the bar of God, to be judged, the doctors say, according to the deeds done in the body.

Such is the character ascribed to our Creator; such is the malevolence of his designs, and such are the means by which it is said he will surely accomplish them. Such are the doctrines which heat the religious zeal of our times, prostrate reason, freeze the kind sympathies of our nature, and drive

on to madness and fatal deliriums.

After ages have past away, during which the church has paid her devotions to an idol so horrible; after the popular clergy have been listened to for centuries, while pouring forth, in torrents of oratory, all this vile abuse of our heavenly

Father; after the world has fully witnessed the unhappy effects of doctrines so dishonorable to God and deleterious to human happiness, can it be deemed unpardonable for one to say, "Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that I have yet to speak on God's behalf?" This indulgence we most sincerely beg. We are persuaded that something may be said on God's behalf, something which will set his character in a fairer light, and commend him, in some measure, to our respect, to our esteem, and even to our love. And surely, if it be possible to find any thing, in the wide universe, of the works and ways of God, which in the smallest degree indicates that his designs in our creation were consistent with real goodness, it is due to him and also to ourselves to seek the precious evidence and to hold it up to the world. Surely no discovery which has yet been made in the wide fields of science, is of half its value; nor is it possible for tidings of any other truth to give half the joy that this would inspire.

The subject now before us seems to divide itself into three

particular inquiries:

1st. Respecting the economy of the Creator, relative to our physical organization, and the provisions he has made to supply our temporal wants, and to render our several senses mediums of enjoyment.

2dly. Respecting the manner in which our Creator treats us as moral beings; and the provisions which he has fur-

nished for our intellectual happiness. And

3dly. Respecting that inheritance, which our Creator, in the character of our Father in heaven, has freely given

us, as manifested in the gospel of his Son.

Although it is not in our power to explore the whole or an hundredth part of the wide field now before us, it is recommended that the hearer should examine the particulars which may be named with reference to the whole extent of the subject; for if what we can comprehend shall be found to indicate the goodness of God, it surely will favor the sentiment, that what lies beyond our comprehension would indicate the same goodness, could we examine the whole.

Let us now examine the construction of our bodies; let us ask the best informed anatomists, whether they have ever discovered any part of the natural, bodily system that is not useful to man, considered simply as an animal, who has to provide for his sustenance? Let us carefully inquire whether a bone, a sinew, a muscle, a cord, a nerve or a fibre has ever been found in the natural organization of the human body, whose use does not contribute to the benefit of the system? Inquire still further, whether any part of the body, ever so minute, appears to have been designed to be worse than useless, and constituted only for the purpose of administering pain and distress? As it is abundantly evident that these queries must be answered in a way to correspond with the benevolent designs of our Creator, we feel justified in saying that it is something on God's behalf. It speaks a language that we can understand, and it argues in favor of the opinion that the Being who contrived the construction of our bodies, was actuated with good will towards us. Let us now compare these known facts, facts about which there is neither dispute nor doubt, with that soulwithering hypothesis concerning the hell which our Creator constituted before he brought our race into being. Let us call on the doctors of the church to take these two subjects and reconcile them one to the other, so that we can understand how their unknown hypothesis, concerning the design of our Creator in making their hell, agrees with what we know of his divine goodness in the construction of our bodies.

Examine next our five natural senses; our hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, smelling. Do we not know that all these are mediums of enjoyment? Is it not perfectly evident that our Creator furnished them for our good? To be deprived of any of these, we know would be to us a loss. By our hearing, we enjoy the invaluable blessing of intercommunity with each other; by this sense also, we enjoy the sweets of music, and all the advantages of sound. With the sense of seeing, we enjoy the beauties of all surrounding objects; with it we behold the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth with all its various productions, all which administer to our inexpressible delight. How delightful is the vast scenery of nature to our sense of sight! Survey the earth; behold its lofty mountains, its waving forests, its verdant lawns, its winding streams, its healthful springs gushing from its bosom, its widely extended oceans, and the islands they contain, its luxuriant fields, its teeming orchards and fruitful gardens; and here pause and fix your eyes on the blossoms of spring, and minutely inspect the rose of summer. Standing in the

midst of such beauty, our delights are too intense to be enjoyed alone; we call those we love around us, that they may partake of pleasures so exquisite. Our pleasurable sense of taste corroborates our proof that the giver of our senses designed our enjoyment. Had our Creator so adapted the variety of aliment, necessary for the support of our bodies, that its flavor was offensive to our taste, we might infer from such a fact, that in this he did not design our enjoyment. But we know that this is not the case. We know that the sense of taste is a sense of pleasure, and that it is a medium of satisfaction. Our senses of feeling and smelling are standing evidences that the design of our Creator, in bestowing our faculties, was that of benevolence. Are not these facts, of which we are all sensible, something on God's behalf? If we were to judge of the design of our Creator by them, could we come to the conclusion that before he gave existence to our race, he invented and created the hell which the doctors have ascribed to his wisdom!

As was proposed, we shall now proceed to an inquiry respecting the manner in which our Creator treats us, as moral beings; and the provisions he has furnished for our intellec-

tual happiness.

1. What has our Creator required of us? What does his law enjoin? This we learn directly from his own word; see Deut. vi, 5: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." Lev. xix, 17, 18: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." With this, agrees the answer of Jesus to the lawyer, who asked him which was the great commandment in the law: Mat. xxii, 37-40: "Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." What do such requirements indicate concerning the design of him who enjoins them? They teach us that he who requires them, loves us. It is a truth in the nature of things, that he who loves God

is happy in that love; and he who loves his neighbor is therein blessed. If God did not design our happiness, why should he require of us no duty, no service, but such as is inseparably united with our highest felicity? It seems that our Creator has given us the strongest evidence of his good will, in the requirements of his law, that the nature of the case could furnish. Here we have direct and ample proof that the doctrine which has united sin and enjoyment in this life, and virtue and misery, is entirely erroneous. This proof also stands equally opposed to that erroneous sentiment, which has placed the reward of a life of obedience in a future state; and the retribution of a life of sin equally remote. For if our whole duty consists in loving God and each other, then obedience is enjoyment; and we are happy precisely in the degree that we obey. Let these self evident truths be duly considered, and compared with that doctrine, with which the doctors of the church have reproached our Creator, by representing him as setting his law for a trap, and enjoyments as bait, to entice us to transgression. And when the pernicious mistake becomes rectified in our minds, let us ask the question, if the truth of God, in relation to his requirements, is not something on his behalf? Does it not commend his character to our approving understanding, and does it not endear it to our strongest affections?

Standing in the light of our present subject, and being surrounded with all its transporting beauties, we would call on the doctors, who, in the dark abyss of error, contrived the doctrine of the hell which they have rendered so ample and awful, and demand of them to reconcile the original designs of this hell with the goodness of our Creator, mani-

fested in the requirements of his law.

Leaving the doctors to the task we have assigned them, we will compare the provisions, which our heavenly Father has so abundantly made for our temporal enjoyments, with those which he has designed for our moral and intellectual felicity. In this comparison we find a perfect agreement. Should the most improved naturalist be asked if it be possible to invent any improvement in the system of our temporal enjoyments, he would tell us that no other improvement is possible, but such as may be made in rightly using the means which our Creator has furnished in our organization,

and the adaptation of every object of pleasure to our senses. So will the truly enlightened moralist inform us, that our duty to our Maker and our duty to each other, embrace all the rational, moral and intellectual happiness of which we are capable; and that all the improvement that can be made in this system, is in our greater conformity to what God has required. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that our Creator would be more careful to provide for our temporal or animal enjoyments, than for our moral or intellectual; especially as it is acknowledged by every enlightened mind, that the latter is of greater moment than the former. The reasoning of Jesus gives us assistance on this subject. From the fact, that our heavenly Father so bountifully feeds the birds of the air, and so gorgeously clothes the lilies of the field, he assured his disciples that he would much more feed and clothe them. Such reasoning, which carries the light of conviction on its face, justifies us in the consoling belief, that he who has made ample provision to render every natural sense we possess a medium of enjoyment, has no less provided for that intellectual and moral felicity of which he has made us capable, and which is far greater. In the light of this reasoning we advance,

Lastly, as was proposed, to inquire respecting that inheritance which our heavenly Father has freely given us, as

manifested in the gospel of his Son.

"The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi, 23. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." 1 John, v, 10, 11. St Paul, speaking of our Saviour Jesus Christ, says, "Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. i, 10. And in 1 Cor. xv, 22, he says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" verses 53, 54: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This immortality St Peter calls an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." 1 Peter, i, 4. In comparison with this gift, this immortal inheritance, all the blessings which our Creator

has bestowed upon us, which are peculiar to our mortal state, dwindle to nothing. As eternity infinitely surpasses time, and as immortality infinitely transcends mortality, so does this gift exceed all of an earthly nature. Is this nothing on God's behalf? What could our heavenly Father have given us that would more commend his benevolence, or more endear him to our hearts? Compare this infinite treasure, the free bounty of our Creator, with that dismal hell, the invention and workmanship of which the doctors ascribe to God, let them endeavor to harmonize their doctrine of hell with the divine testimony, which assures us that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Our earthly existence was the free gift of our Creator, bestowed on us in the first man Adam; and so our immortal existence is the free gift of our heavenly Father, bestowed on us in Christ, the last Adam, who was made a quickening spirit. If our present mode of existence, with all its properties and means of enjoyment, was the free gift of our Creator, without the consideration of any conditions on our part, how much more should we suppose our heavenly Father would freely and without conditions, bestow on us that immortal state, which as much exceeds the present, as eternity exceeds time! If our Creator, without resting it on conditions for us to perform, freely granted us this present, corruptible inheritance, which has been defiled by our follies, and which must soon fade away, will he be less provident respecting that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away; but which is reserved in heaven for us? The argument of Jesus, which we have noticed, assures us that as our heavenly Father provides for the less, so much more will he provide for the greater. He would not allow his disciples to be careful for what they should eat, or for what they should drink, nor yet for wherewithal they should be clothed, so long as it was known that our heavenly Father knew that they needed these things, and that he bountifully bestowed them on the fowls of the air, and on the lilies of Let the doctors, who endeavor to frighten us with their horrid representations of hell, be called on to reconcile their doctrine with the instructions of Jesus. Let them attempt to show us, that it is reasonable to believe that he who carefully and curiously enrobes the lilies, in all the beauties of exquisite dies, who bountifully feeds the fowls,

who sow not, nor gather into barns, created the hell which they preach to the people, before be brought man into existence, and furnished it with all its apparatus of torture, for the purpose of tormenting immortal beings, both angels and

men, to all eternity.

We have not time to follow these doctors through their learned and critical arguments, by which they arm the justice of God against his imperfect, erring children; and give it a relentless, unmerciful wrath, which nothing but infinite torture can satisfy; nor have we any occasion to attempt it. It is sufficient, after hearing all they have to offer on this subject, by which they reproach our Maker, representing him to be as much worse than all other beings, as he is more powerful, to reply in the kind language of divine inspiration, Lam. iii, 31--33, "For the Lord will not cast off forever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

To conclude. If all we see and know of the divine economy, respecting the human family, if the testimony of divine inspiration, and our whole experience, all unite in one voice, proclaiming, GOD IS LOVE, may we not be suffered a little to speak on God's behalf? to unite our feeble testimony with every divine declaration, in proclaiming GOD IS LOVE?

ART. XIV.

Water Baptism.

1. The ordinance of Water Baptism has long been a fruitful subject of controversy among christians. They have warmly debated two questions:—whether the ordinance should be administered by immersion, or by sprinkling; and whether it should be administered to adults only, or both to adults

and to infants. This controversy has been considered of such vital importance to the interests of piety and true religion, that resort has sometimes been had to force, as either of the contending parties may have had opportunity. Thus, in former times, the Baptists, technically so called, were banished, by their opposers, from this commonwealth, then a British Province. And thus also, in the present day, the Baptists, according to the lex talionis, banish their opposers from their communion tables.

Before we attach ourselves to either party, and become partakers of the contentions and heartburnings which this controversy has produced, it may be prudent for us to inquire carefully whether the ordinance of water baptism is commanded to be perpetually observed in the christian Church. For if it be not thus commanded, there can be no necessity for violent contention respecting the manner of its administration, or the age or qualifications of its subjects.

To this inquiry the present article will be devoted.

II. The words baptize, baptism, and others of like form, are not found in the English translation of the Old Testament. Yet βαπτίζω and βάπτω occur in the Septuagint. They do not however, in any case, appear to indicate the ceremony technically called baptism; but they are applied to washing or sprinkling the body or garments, or dipping the finger, or foot, or food, or garments, in divers

liquids, -- such as oil, vinegar, honey, and blood.

Yet it is said, on the authority of the Jewish writers, that it was customary to baptize proselytes, before the days of John the Baptist. "The institution of baptism for an evangelical sacrament, was first in the hand of the Baptist; who, the word of the Lord coming to him, Luke, iii, 11, went forth, backed with the same authority as the chiefest prophets had in time past. But yet the first use of baptism was not exhibited at that time. For baptism, very many centuries back, had been both known and received in most frequent use among the Jews; and for the very same end as it now obtains among christians, namely, that by it, prose-

¹ Exo. xii, 22,—xiv, 16. Lev. iv, 6, 17,—ix, 9,—xi, 32,—xiv, 6, 51.—Deut. xxxiii, 24. Numb. xix, 18. Josh. iii, 15. Ruth, ii, 14. I Samuel, xiv, 27. 2 Kings, v, 14,—viii. 15. Ps. lxviii, 23. Job, ix, 31. Isa. xxi, 4 Ezek. xxiii, 15. Dan. iv, 33,—v, 21. Son of Sirach, xxxiv, 25.

lytes might be admitted into the church; and hence it was called baptism for proselytism, and was distinct from baptism or washing for uncleanness. All the Jews assert, as it were with one mouth, that all the nation of Israel were brought into the covenant, among other things, by baptism. Israel, (saith Maimonides, the great interpreter of the Jewish law,) was admitted into the covenant by three things,

namely, by circumcision, baptism and sacrifice."

So much it seems proper to quote, to account for the readiness with which the Jews submitted to the baptism of John. It was not a novel ceremony; but one to which they had long been accustomed. But the practice of the Jews has no direct bearing on the main point at issue, even though their practice might have been authorized or commanded by their law; for with the ceremonies enjoined by the law the Gentiles have no concern, as to their religious duty, whether the Jews be yet bound by that law, or not.

In relation to our subject, the only important question we have to consider is this:-Is water baptism a Christian ordinance, intended or commanded to be perpetual in the Christian church? If it can be proved that the perpetual observance of this ordinance is enjoined by the precept, or by the example, of Jesus Christ, or of his apostles, then we are bound to render obedience; but if it be not thus enjoined, then we are free; for we are not subject to any ordinance, as a religious duty, which is not enjoined by Christ, or by his apostles.

It may assist us in coming to a correct conclusion on this subject, if we notice the various senses in which our Lord and his apostles use the words, which are translated baptize and baptism. These are βάπτω, εμβάπτω, βαπτίζω, βαπτιεμός,

and βάπτισμα.

Βάπτω occurs three times, and is in each case translated by the word dip, in some of its forms. Εμβάπτω also occurs three times, and is translated by the same word. In these passages, we read of dipping the finger in water,2 of dipping garments in blood,3 and of dipping the hand, or a sop, in a

¹Dr. Lightfoot, quoted by Adam Clark, in fin. Mark. 3 Rev. xix, 13. ² Luke, xvi, 24.

dish. Although these words are never translated by the word baptize, yet as they are of similar formation and signification with the others we have named, it seems proper to give them this passing notice. Bantionis occurs four times. and is in three cases translated by the word washing, and once by the word baptisms. In these passages we read of the "doctrine of baptisms," of "divers washings," and of the "washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. "4

There remain for examination, βαπτίζω and βάητισμα. These we shall notice together, as both are frequently found in the same verse, and as they are generally of similar signification. The limits of this article will not permit us to notice particularly all the passages, in which these words occur; we have placed them however in a note; the reader can examine them at his leisure.5

The baptism of John was doubtless performed with water; whether by immersion or sprinkling, we need not now inquire. "John truly baptized with water." With this baptism he baptized Jesus Christ, and also the multi-

tude which went out to him in the wilderness.

2. The Jews had a custom of effecting a legal purification, by washing the hands, or body, or garments. To this custom we suppose the apostle to allude, when he writes to the Hebrews concerning their "divers washings." We read of the Pharisees, and Jews generally, that "when they come from the market, except they wash, βαπτίσωνται they eat not."8 "A certain Pharisee besought him (Jesus) to dine with him; and he went in and sat down to meat, and when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed, Bantloll before dinner."9

In these instances, there can be no doubt that a washing.

Mat. xxvi. 23. Mark xiv, 20. John xiii, 26. ²Heb. vi, 2.

³ Heb. ix, 10. ⁴Mark vii, 4, 8.

⁵ Βαπτίρω Mat. iii, 6, 11, 13, 14, 16,—xx, 22, 23,—xxviii, 19. Mark, i, 4, 5, 8, 9,—vi, 14,—vii, 4,—x, 38, 39,—xvi, 16, Luke iii, 7, 12, 16, 21,—vii, 29, 30,—xi, 38,—xii, 50. John i, 25, 26, 28, 31, 33,—iii, 22, 23, 26,—iv, 1, 2,—x, 40. Acts i, 5,—ii, 3, 8, 41,—viii, 12, 13, 16, 36, 38,—ix, 18,—x, 47, 48,—xi, 16,—xvi, 15, 33,—xviii, 8,—xix, 3, 4, 5,—xxii, 16. Rom. vi, 3. 1 Cor. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17,—x, 2,—xii, 13,—xv, 29. Gal. iii, 27. Βάπτισμα Mat. iii, 7,—xx, 22, 23,—xxii, 25. Mark i, 4,—x, 38, 39,—xi, 30. Luke iii, 3,—vii, 29,—xii, 50,—xx, 4. Acts i, 22,—x, 37,—xiii, 25,—xix, 3, 4. Rom. vi, 4. Eph. iv, 5. Col. ii, 12. 1 Pet. iii, 21.

⁶ Acts i, 5. Theb. ix, 10.

⁶ Mark vii, 4.

⁹ Luke xi, 38.

or baptism with water is intended. But in other passages, these words appear to be used figuratively, not indicating that the subjects of baptism were either washed or sprinkled with water, or any other liquid. We observe, then,

3. In the epistle to the Corinthians, we have these words: "All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea." Moses notices the circumstances thus: "The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."3 "And the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them."4 It does not appear that the Israelites were made wet by the waters of the Red Sea; for they went through "upon the dry ground," and the waters were a wall on both sides. Yet because they were encompassed by the waters, the apostle says figuratively, they were "baptized—in the sea." Neither does it appear that they contracted the least moisture or dampness from the cloud, any more than that they were scorched by the "pillar of fire;" yet because it went before them, and behind them, and in a manner encircled them, the apostle, by a like figure of speech, says they were "baptized—in the cloud."

4. Baptism seems to be used to signify doctrine. "Being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John." He knew nothing more of Christ, or his doctrine, than had been taught by John the Baptist; and so much he taught diligently. Baptism had been used as a ceremony of admission into the Jewish church; and it implied, on the part of the candidate, a confession or declaration of proselytism. The same ceremony was adopted by John, and we may reasonably suppose those whom he baptized, declared their faith in his doctrine. By a common figure of speech, baptism, the ceremony of induction, is put for the doctrine itself, into which the person was baptized. Of the same nature are the following passages: "After the baptism

¹1 Cor. x, 1, 2. ²Exo. xiv, 22. ³Exo. xiii, 21. ⁴Exo. xiv, 19. ⁵Acts xviii, 25. ²1

which John preached." The most obvious sense of this passage is, the doctrine, or as we read in the same verse, the "word," which John preached. "When John had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel." He preached the doctrine of repentance, or he exhorted men to repent. This was his principal subject. We read that "in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This was his doctrine or his baptism.

5. Baptism is used to signify a state of extreme distress. "Are ye able to drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," &c. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." In these passages, Christ evidently speaks of the distress, and agony, and death, he was about to endure, in accomplishing the

work for which he was sent into the world.

6. There is yet one more sense in which baptism is used; and in this sense it indicates that which is indeed and in truth the baptism of Christ, or the Christian baptism. John the Baptist says, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." This baptism is called by Cruden the "inward spiritual washing, whereby the gifts and graces of the spirit, signified by the outward sign, are really and actually bestowed." Concord. in verb. baptism.

Such are the various senses in which βαπτίζω and βάπτισμα occur in the New Testament. We have noticed them the more fully, in order to show that we are not necessarily bound to attach to these terms the idea of immersion or

¹Acts x, 37. ²Acts xiii, 24. ³Mat. iii, 2. ⁴See on this subject Mat. xxi, 25. Mark xi, 30,—i, 4. Luke iii, 3,—xx, 4. Acts xix, 3, 4, 5. ⁵Mat. xx, 22, 23. Mark x, 38, 39. ⁶Luke xii, 50. ⁷Mat. iii, 11. Comp. Mark i, 8. Luke iii, 16. John 1, 33. ⁸Acts xi, 16. Comp. Acts i, 4, 5.

sprinkling, in all cases. But we are at liberty to select from the variety of interpretations, of which they are susceptible, that which shall best comport with the context, and with the general doctrine of the Scriptures.

We now come to the main question: Is the perpetual observance of water baptism, as a christian ordinance, enjoined by the precept or example of Jesus Christ or his

apostles?

IV. Is the perpetual observance of this ordinance en-

joined by the example of Christ?

1. It is said that he was baptized with water, and therefore all his followers are bound to imitate him. True, he was thus baptized. But whether this consequence necessarily follows, we may the more fully understand after an examination. The fact stands recorded thus: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him." Why was Christ baptized? He says, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." What do these words imply? What kind of righteousness is intended? On this question let us hear Dr. A. Clarke, who will not be suspected of prejudice against this ordinance.

"To fulfil all righteousness; that is, every righteous ordinance; so I think diagnosimus should be translated; and so our common version renders a similar word, Luke ii, 6. The following passage, quoted from Justin Martyr, will doubtless appear a strong vindication of this translation. "Christ was circumcised, and observed all the other ordinances of the law of Moses, not with a view to his own justification; but to fulfil the dispensation committed to him by the Lord, the

God and Creator of all things." Wakefield.

"But was this an ordinance? Undoubtedly: it was the initiatory ordinance of the Baptist's dispensation. Now as Christ had submitted to circumcision, which was the initiatory ordinance of the Mosaic dispensation; it was necessary that he should submit to this, which was instituted by

no less an authority, and was the introduction to his own

dispensation of eternal truth."

Viewing the subject in this light, and it appears to be the true sense of the passage, we see not how the fact, that Christ was baptized with water, affords proof that this baptism is enjoined as a perpetual ordinance. As well might we say that the same proof is afforded concerning the ordinance of circumcision, by the fact that Christ was circumcised. For if it be said, Christ was baptized with water, therefore this ordinance is enjoined to be perpetually observed,-it may be alleged with equal propriety, and equal force, Christ was circumcised; therefore the ordinance of circumcision is enjoined to be observed perpetually. was baptized, and he was circumcised, merely in conformity to the requisitions of the dispensations, under which these ordinances were respectively administered. But this fact, in our apprehension, does not afford conclusive evidence. that either of these ordinances was designed to be perpetual under his own dispensation.

2. It is alleged that Christ baptized others; and therefore all his followers are bound to imitate him. "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized."2 But did he baptize with his own hands? Let the same evangelist answer the question. "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John; (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.")3 It is very common to attribute the operations of servants to their master. Thus Solomon is said to have builded a temple for the worship of God; though manifestly nothing more is intended, than that the work was done under his direction. If we adopt this principle, and give to the first quoted passage the same explanation which the evangelist himself gives to the other, we find them in harmony; we also learn the fact that Christ himself did not baptize any person with water. The argument, therefore, from the supposed fact that he did

thus baptize, is without force.

In this place it may be proper to observe, that the Scriptures afford no evidence, that one of the apostles was baptized, except Paul, who was called into the ministry after the

¹Comment. in loco. ²John iii. 22. See also verse 26. ascension of Christ. It is not written that they were baptized by John; and Jesus did not baptize any one. If baptism with water be an essential ordinance, and they had received it from John, would it not have been recorded, as an example for our imitation? And as they had not been baptized by him, (at all events, we have no proof that they had,) is it not utterly unaccountable, that Christ did not baptize his own apostles, if he intended to enjoin the perpetual observance of this ordinance on all his followers? The reader will judge whether the example of Christ enjoins us to observe water baptism as a christian ordinance.

V. Is such an injunction found in any precepts of Christ? That this point may be clearly understood, we shall notice all the passages, in which our Lord is recorded to have mentioned the subject of baptism.

1. We find him twice speaking of his approaching sufferings, under the figure of baptism. The passages have already been quoted, "Are ye able to drink of my cup, and to be baptized," &c. And, "I have a baptism to be baptized with," &c. Of course, these passages do not afford evidence in favor of water baptism; for this subject is not mentioned.

2. He speaks of the baptism of John. "The baptism of John; whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" 3 We have already offered some remarks, to show that when the baptism of John is thus mentioned, it is to be understood as signifying his doctrine. If this be a correct supposition, then we are to understand the inquiry to be, whether the doctrine taught by John were from heaven, or of men. But suppose water baptism to be intended; do the words of Christ contain an injunction for its perpetual observance? It is said that his inquiry implies that his baptism was "from heaven," or of divine origin. We admit it. And so was circumcision from heaven, or of divine origin, in the same sense; for that was ordained of God, as a token of the covenant he made with his chosen people. But its divine origin did not prevent its abrogation under the dispensation of Christ. The baptism of John was certainly of no higher authority. The single fact, therefore, that it was of divine origin, does not prove that it might never be abrogated.

¹Matt. xx. 22, 23. Comp. Mark x. 38, 39. ²Luke xii. 50. Matt. xxi. 25; Mark xi. 30; Luke xx. 4.

3. Christ mentions this baptism, in connexion with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." This testimony is certainly not very conclusive in favor of water baptism; for this is represented to be of much less consequence than the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The same testimony had been before borne by John the Baptist. John seems to have been fully aware that his dispensation and its ordinances, were to continue but a short time. He says of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease." And when Jesus presented himself for baptism, "John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee; and comest thou to me?" 4 He appears to have thought that his ministry and baptism had then ended, as Christ had appeared publicly. In reply to John, Jesus did not say he desired, by his own example, to enjoin the perpetual observance of this rite; but,—" Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." That is, as we have already observed, it becometh me to comply with the stated ordinances of your dispensation, by being baptized,—even as I have already complied with those of the legal dispensation, by being circumcised,—before I commence my ministry, and establish the dispensation committed to me.

We have now noticed all the passages, in which Christ mentions the subject of baptism, except two; these we reserve to be considered at the close of the discussion, as we may then perhaps be better prepared to discover their true import. It is submitted whether, thus far, water bap-

tism is enjoined by any precept of Christ.

We close this part of our examination with a single remark. When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles, he said, "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." He gave them full instructions concerning the duties they were to perform. In like manner, he sent out the seventy, giving them a commission and instructions. They were to preach, saying, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." After his resurrection, Christ converted Paul, and

³Acts, i. 5.Comp. xi. 16. ²Matt. iii. 11. et. al. ³John iii, 30. ⁴Matt iii, 14. ⁵Mat. x, passim. Comp. Mark vi, 7,—13. Luke ix, 1,—6. ⁴Luke x, 1, 16.

commissioned him as an apostle to the Gentiles. In these cases, (which comprehend all of importance, except the commission to the eleven, which we shall presently notice,) although he gave special direction concerning other duties they were to perform, Christ said not one word to his disciples, enjoining them to baptize men with water. His silence affords very strong presumptive proof, that he had no anxiety for the administration of this rite. At all events, he is silent, where we might reasonably expect to find a positive injunction, if he intended that water baptism should be perpetually observed by his followers.

VI. Is the observance of this ordinance enjoined by the cxample of the apostles? There can be no doubt that many of the apostles, perhaps all, did sometimes baptize converts with water; though it is questionable whether water was used in all cases, in which they are said to have baptized. But they did baptize some with water. Are we therefore bound to do likewise? It will not be denied that the apostles adopted some customs, or practices, which are in no manner binding on us.

1. They gave up all right to individual property, and held their possessions in common.³ But no one will seriously contend, that we are bound to adopt the same practice; and for a good reason: neither Christ nor his apostles have commanded us to do it. They adopted such customs as they found convenient; and so may we, if we do not trespass on the rights of others. But we are not bound to imitate them, in such matters, except so far as such imita-

tion may promote our own or the general good.

2. Paul circumcised Timothy. Are we bound to imitate him? He did not do this because he considered circumcision a binding ordinance; for he elsewhere testifies, "In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." In the context we have a reason for his conduct. It is said he "circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters; for they knew all that his father was a Greek." Hence it appears that this action was performed,

¹Acts ix, 1,—18,—xxii, 1,—21,—xxvi, 12. 18. ³Acts ii, 44, 45. 4Gal. v, 6. ²Acts xix, 5 et al. ⁵Acts xvi, 3. not as a matter of duty, but merely in conformity to Jewish prejudices. "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews." He was willing to gratify their prejudices, so far as the simple ceremony might be concerned; knowing that in itself it was neither commanded, nor prohibited to those who were the disciples of Jesus. But that he did not circumcise Timothy, as a matter of duty, appears yet more plainly from another fact: when certain false brethren attached undue importance to this ceremony, and insisted that he should perform it on Titus, (who was also a Greek,) he utterly refused, and would not "give place, no, not for an hour."

3. It may be observed, in this connexion, that when Paul, on a certain time, visited Jerusalem, the other apostles exhorted him to conform outwardly to the requisitions of the Mosaic law, to gratify the prejudices of the Jewish converts; and he consented to do it. But that all this was done, merely from motives of expediency, and not as a matter of duty, is evident from what the apostles themselves declared in their exhortation to Paul:—"As touching the Gentiles, we have written and concluded that they observe no such

thing."3

From these facts may we not conclude, that the apostles adopted some customs, merely for convenience, as the community of goods;—or to induce men to embrace the gospel, by humoring their prejudices,—as in the two cases last noticed? And may we not, on the same principle, suppose them to have baptized some converts with water, although they did not look on this as a binding ordinance? If they circumcised some, to gratify the Jews, they might have baptized others, to gratify those who had been the disciples of John. Under these circumstances, we cannot see that we are bound to imitate their example in the observance of one ceremony, rather than another, unless we shall find some precept enjoining such imitation.

VII. Have we any precept from the Apostles, enjoining the administration of water baptism, as a christian ordinance? It might be a sufficient reply to this question, to state the fact, that neither in the Acts of the Apostles, nor in any of

¹Cor. ix. 20. et seq. ²Gal. ii. 3—5. ³Acts xxi. 18—26.

their Epistles, is any such precept to be found. They were free to give advice and command, in regard to faith and practice, so far as either was considered essential. They enjoined faith, repentance, holiness, love to God and man, justice, temperance, prayer, thanksgiving, public worship, and many other duties; but not once did they enjoin water baptism. The statement of this fact alone, might be sufficient under this head. But we shall notice another fact, which seems to indicate that this kind of baptism may be considered one of the "divers washings," or baptisms, as the word may be rendered, which were "imposed until the time of reformation."

The church at Corinth appears to have been much divided into sects; some professed to follow Paul, others Apollos, others Cephas, others Christ. Paul reproves them sharply for their divisions and dissensions. He exclaims,—"Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanus; besides I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize,

but to preach the gospel."2

Hence it would seem that Paul did not consider it his duty to administer this ordinance. With this agree his words to the Ephesians: There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" by which we suppose him to mean, that, according to the gospel, there is only one true Lord, only one true faith, only one true or effectual baptism. But no one disputes that the peculiar baptism of the christian dispensation is that which John mentions, in contradistinction to his own, or water baptism, when he says of Christ, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The apostles likewise, as we have seen, were careful to distinguish between the two. If Paul then believed that baptism with the Holy Ghost was the true baptism, and that there was only one true baptism, he surely could not have considered it his duty to baptize with water.

But suppose he did consider this to be his duty, how shall we account for the fact that he baptized so few during his

long abode at Corinth? "He continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." And as we learn from a succeeding verse, in addition to this time, he "tarried there yet a good while." Now among all who were converted, (and they were "many,") why should he thank God he had baptized so few, if he considered himself bound to administer this ordinance?

It has been alleged that the following words sufficiently account for this fact: "Lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name." As there was so much contention in this church, concerning the respective merits of those by whose ministry the different members had been converted, it is alleged that Paul rejoiced that there was so little reason to charge him with having endeavored to form a separate

party, inasmuch as he had baptized only a few.

This explanation may be very well, as far as it goes; but we seriously question whether it be sufficient to reconcile his conduct with the supposition that he considered it his duty to baptize with water. There are several circumstances, in addition to that already noticed, which render it much more probable that he did not consider it his duty to administer this rite.

- 1. It will not be disputed, that Paul was one of the most bold and fearless disciples of our Lord. In the performance of what he considered his duty, he was not deterred by frowns or flattery. He went steadily forward, heeding not the consequences, so far as his own ease or prosperity might be concerned. He cheerfully encountered bonds, and stripes, and imprisonment, and dishonor, for the sake of his master. and his master's gospel. Is it then to be supposed, that this highminded and devoted apostle would neglect a known duty, through fear that some contentious person might accuse him falsely? Is it to be supposed that he would thank God that he had neglected a known duty, merely because, by this neglect, he had escaped the censure of men? Such conduct is wholly inconsistent with the character of this But such was his conduct, if he considered himself bound to baptize with water, and yet neglected his duty, and thanked God that he had done so.
 - 2. It may be inquired why he baptized Crispus and

Gaius, and the household of Stephanus, if he did not consider it his duty to baptize? We reply: although in matters which he considered essential, he would not swerve from the path of duty, to the right hand or to the left, to gratify his friends, or to avoid the persecutions of his enemies, yet we have already seen, that in matters which he deemed unessential, he was willing to conform to the prejudices of others. Thus he circumcised Timothy, when the act was considered a harmless ceremony, and a matter of mere expediency; but at another time, when this act was represented as an important, essential ordinance, he steadfastly refused to circumcise Titus. So also he might baptize a few, not as a duty, but to gratify others by the observance of a harmless ceremony; and afterwards, when he found baptism occasioning contention, he might consistently thank God that he had baptized no more.

3. We learn from his own words, that Paul viewed the subject in this light; "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." If he was not sent to baptize, the administration of this ordinance was no part of his duty. It was wholly a matter of expediency. When he baptized, he acted on his own authority, even as in another case, where he says, "I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful." It would surely seem very strange that he should thank God that he had neglected a known duty. But, supposing him not to have been sent to baptize, and in baptizing to have acted on his own authority, according to his own views of expediency, his conduct appears perfectly natural and consistent. He might with propriety thank God that he had given no more occasion for contention, by conformity to the prejudices of the people, in regard to a ceremony, harmless in itself, but not commanded to be observed as a duty.

In view of the circumstances we have mentioned, we conclude that Paul did not consider water baptism as an ordinance, designed to be perpetual in the christian church. And we have not been able to discover that he, or any one of the apostles, has enjoined its observance, by precept or exam-

ple.

VIII. There remain for examination two passages, in which Christ mentions the subject of baptism, and which were reserved for consideration in this place.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;

but he that believeth not shall be damned."2

On this text we observe, that no particular kind of baptism is specified; hence it does not of itself afford proof that water baptism is a christian ordinance. Besides, the apostles are not commanded, in so many words, to baptize, but only to preach the gospel. There are reasons, however, for supposing Christ to speak of the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

1. This is peculiarly the christian baptism; and without this, water baptism is useless. It is not the outward washing with water, but the inward purification effected by the spirit of grace, which renders man a subject of salvation in this world, or the next. As in this passage, baptism is in some degree connected with salvation; as no such connexion exists between washing with water, and salvation here or hereafter; and as such connexion does exist between spiritual baptism and salvation, in every state of existence, we are justified in concluding that this last is intended.

It is observable that in none of the commissions given to the apostle, before his resurrection, did Christ instruct them to baptize. It is also a fact that none of his disciples had then been baptized with the Holy Ghost. But after his resurrection, he "commanded them that they should not depart out of Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts i. 4, 5.) At this time, also, to wit, after his resurrection, he commanded them to teach and baptize all nations into (sis) the name, or doctrine of the Father, Son, and Spirit. If water baptism be intended, why were they not commanded to perform the ceremony when they were before sent out? and why particularly commanded at this time? But if we understand Christ to speak of the baptism with the Holy Ghost, we find a sufficient reason why they were never before commanded to baptize: they had no power to perform the work. And even now they were commanded not to depart from Jerusalem, to teach and baptize all nations, until they should themselves be baptized with the Holy Ghost. And it was added, "But ye shall be witnesses unto me," &c. It might be a subject of curious and useful inquiry, how far these facts afford proof that baptism with the Holy Ghost was intended by Christ, in the commission he gave to the eleven, after his resurrection. But our limits will not permit us to pursue the investigation.

*Mark, xvi. 15. 16.

2. Certain signs are mentioned, as following believers and baptized persons, (if we suppose all believers to have been baptized,) which have followed none except such as in the apostolic age received the gift of the Holy Ghost. This may justify the conclusion that this kind of baptism is intended; and perhaps the passage should be understood as having exclusive reference to those who lived in that age, when the Holy Ghost was miraculously communicated. At all events, we see no proof in this text that water baptism is enjoined as a perpetual ordinance.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is the only passage which remains for examination. And it is worthy of remark, that it is the only passage in the Bible which commands one to baptize another. Since this is the fact, we ought to be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that water baptism is intended before we yield assent. For surely if this baptism be a christian ordinance, a neglect of which is sinful, and if it rest for authority on a solitary text, that text should not be ambiguous but plain, and full to the purpose. Is the text under consideration of this nature? Does it of necessity indicate water baptism, and will it bear no other interpretation? If so, then the matter is settled. But if not, then the subject remains open for investigation.

It is not pretended that this text cannot be understood to imply baptism with water. But we conceive it will bear another construction, more consistent with the facts already noticed.

1. The apostles were enabled by the divine energy bestowed on them, to communicate the special gifts, or baptism, of the Holy Ghost, to those on whom they should lay hands. One passage is sufficient for our purpose: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." The text under consideration may perhaps be understood as a command that the apostles should communicate this kind of baptism. But we question whether this be its exact import. It seems more probable that baptism is to be understood in another sense; though in fact, as it will appear, the construction we are about to offer will result

in nearly the same thing; for it seems to be the fact, that in that age, the gift of the Holy Ghost was generally bestowed on believers. We observe, then,

To be baptized in the name of any person, as we have before remarked, sometimes signifies to be baptized, or instructed, into the knowledge, or doctrine, of such person. Of this use of the term the following is an instance. "All our fathers—were baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea." The word here rendered unto is is, and is the same, which in the text is rendered in; the same word is frequently rendered into. Dr. A. Clarke, on this passage says, "rather into Moses, into the covenant, of which Moses was the mediator." Parkhurst gives the same view of the subject: "into the covenant, and into obedience to those laws which Moses delivered to them from God." The pillar of cloud was a standing miracle before the eyes of the Israelites. The division of the Red Sea, through which they passed dry shod, was also a stupendous manifestation of the power of God. By both, they were convinced that Moses was divinely commissioned, and were persuaded of the truth and divine origin of the covenant, of which he was the mediator. By a figure of speech, the apostle, instead of saying they were persuaded, or instructed, says they were baptized; and this baptism or instruction, into the covenant, he calls baptism into Moses; putting the name of the person, for the doctrine or covenant, of which he was the mediator.

In like manner may this text be understood as a command to the apostles, that they should teach all nations, and display before them, the evidence of the divine mission of Christ and the truth of his covenant. Thus would men be instructed or baptized into his name, or doctrine, even as were the Jews into that of Moses, by the miracles they witnessed.

Another instance of this use of the word baptism may be noticed. Paul inquired of certain disciples at Ephesus, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost, since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto (165, into) what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto (165) John's baptism. Then said Paul, John

¹¹ Cor. x, 1, 2

verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied." These disciples declared that they had been baptized into John's baptism. The most natural meaning of this expression is, that they had been instructed into John's doctrine. After this, they were baptized into the name, or doctrine of the Lord Jesus. If baptism by water be intended in this passage, it would seem that these persons were thus baptized twice. But we are not aware that the apostles ever rebaptized with water any one who had been first baptized by John. And least of all could we expect Paul to do it, since he has declared his opinion on the subject so plainly. But if we understand baptism to mean instruction, the sense is natural and easy: these persons had been instructed by John, as far as his knowledge extended. Afterwards, Paul "perfected that which was lacking in their faith," instructing them into the knowledge of Jesus; they then, in common with other believers, received the Holy Ghost.

If the text under consideration be interpreted according to this principle, we apprehend it will be more consistent than the common interpretation, with the facts noticed in this discussion. And as we have already intimated, as the special influences and gifts of the spirit were commonly bestowed on believers, and as this instruction into the doctrine of the Father, Son and Spirit, was the medium through which belief, or faith was attained; therefore, such instruction might, in a certain sense, be termed a baptism with the Holy Ghost; and the apostles might understand the command of Christ as requiring them to communicate the Holy Ghost they should receive, by instructing their fellow men into the knowledge of his doctrine.²

^{&#}x27;Acts, xix, 1, 6.
This view of the text is in harmony with the evident meaning of the parallel passage (Mark xvi, 15,) before noticed. It was the common privilege of the disciples of Christ to receive not only the ordinary graces, but also the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit; and thus the disciples of Christ differed from those of John, and of all others. John baptized with

IX. "Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum:"

1. The Apostles did sometimes baptize with water; but we have assigned a sufficient reason for their so doing, without supposing they considered themselves bound by a command; and have attempted to show that their example, in this respect, imposes on us no obligation to do likewise.

2. They have given us no commandment to baptize with water. But one of them, instead of giving us such commandment, thanked God that he had conformed so little to

the prejudices of others, and had baptized so few.

3. Christ never baptized with water. He was himself baptized for the same reason for which he was circumcised. His example does not seem to enjoin water baptism.

4. He has given us no such commandment; unless in a single passage. But this passage will bear a different interpretation, more consistent with the facts noticed, and in perfect conformity with the use of the word baptism in other

passages.

We might show the inutility of water baptism, by remarking that it was wholly independent of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. We read of some who had been baptized, and had not received the Holy Ghost; and of others, that they received the Holy Ghost, and were afterwards baptized with water, as a ceremony of admission into the christian church. For as the Jews received their proselytes, and John his converts, by baptism, so the apostles seem to have adopted the same custom, in a degree, in admitting members to the fellowship of the faithful. But we need not enlarge on this point.

Under the several circumstances we have noticed, the question is humbly submitted: whether water baptism is to be considered a christian ordinance, obligatory on all the disciples of Christ; or whether it is a harmless ceremony, which may be performed or neglected, without advantage or disadvantage, except so far as the performance or neglect of it may afford ground for dissension and angry disputation.

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water, Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost." Clarke, Comment. in Acts xix, 2. Baptism with water would not produce the effect mentioned in the passage. But baptism with the Holy Ghost would produce it, and the "signs" would follow such as were thus baptized.

¹Acts, viii. 14-17. ²Acts, xi, 44-48.

ART. XV.

Intolerance, the effect of a belief in the Doctrine of

Endless Misery.

THE example set by the Gileadites of old, when engaged in the extermination of their Ephraimite enemies, of establishing a certain watchword, by which their opponents might be discovered, and thereby exposed to their relentless warfare, seems to have been a model for the imitation of the professedly christian world, ever since. It has been the practice of nearly all religious sects, since the days of the apostles, to endeavor to promulgate their peculiar notions and creeds by violence and force of arms, if it could not be accomplished by other means. They have established certain watchwords or hailing signs, indicative of certain standards of faith, to which all were required to assent, or suffer for their nonconformity at the stake or in the dungeon. The individual who would not pronounce the Shibboleth of the dominant sect, was doomed to the faggot and the flame, or the more ruthless sword. The passes of the spiritual Jordan were guarded by the sentinels of bigotry, superstition, and fanaticism; and he who had not the caballistic sign of the hydraheaded monster, had no escape. Look at the conduct of the Jewish high priests, scribes and Pharisees. Was it not the withering spirit of persecution in these men, which heaped ignominy upon Jesus of Nazareth, and finally brought him to a painful death upon the cross? Our Saviour did not acknowledge their creeds, did not bow to their dogmas, and had not their password; and he suffered in consequence. The same spirit of persecution brought reproach, imprisonment and death to the disciples. Stephen was stoned to death, "calling on God,"-John was beheaded,-James was destroyed by the sword-and Paul was scourged and imprisoned.

Tracing the page of history a little farther, we shall find that the state took the church under its special protection. From the third to the fourteenth century, popery overspread the civilized world. A dark and merciless superstition hover-

ed like a cloud over the human mind. The Bible was to the people a sealed book. "The right of private judgment was annihilated." The priests at the altar thundered out their own maledictions and anathemas, instead of the blessings and the hopes of the gospel of peace. The watchwords of this dark period were the "infallibility of the pope"—"transubstantiation"—"general indulgence"—and "purgatorial pains for those who were not of the true faith"; and he who dared to breathe his suspicions against these points of doctrine, was branded as a heretic, excommunicated from the church, and consigned over to remediless wo.

The celebrated reformer, John Wickliffe, was the first who set at defiance the fulminations of the pope, and dared to think and write against the errors of the age; and though he was not slain because he had not the Shibboleth of catholicism, some thirty years after his death his opinions were condemned by a grave council of bishops and deacons his mouldering bones were raised from their sepulchre, burnt and thrown into the brook of Lutterworth! Thus did the rulers of the church express the malice of their hearts against the unconscious remains of a man who had dared to question their infallibility! How contemptible the revenge! how impotent the triumph! John Huss of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, were the next distinguished martyrs to the spirit of catholic persecution. They acknowledged not the creeds of the dominant sect, and were burnt alive for their unbelief. The former was stripped of his sacerdotal robes by priests appointed for that purpose, was deprived of his university degrees, and had a paper crown put on his head, painted with devils and the word Heresiarch (or heretic) inscribed thereon; -thus ignominiously attired, he was led to the stake; his body burnt to ashes, and his ashes thrown into the Rhine. And why? because the Gileadites of the day were the prevailing party, and he was an heretical Ephramite, who would not pronounce their Shibboleth! So of Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and others. They were all denounced and stigmatized as heretics. But mark the issue. When they had gained the ascendancy over popery, they set up certain creeds and opinions, to which they required the assent of all, and in their turn, denounced and stigmatized those who differed from them; yea, not only denounced them, but hunted them

like outlawed banditti to prison and to death! The lex talionis, or the unchristian law of retaliation, was put into fearful requisition by the Protestants, against all who opposed their peculiar notions. The poor Anabaptists, a sect which arose about that period, as well as the Catholics, now became the persecuted class, and with the strong arm of power directed by the blind zeal of fanaticism, what else could be expected than the universal distress, and almost the universal extermination of the offending minority! Neither age nor sex was spared in the indiscriminate havoc. Joan of Kent, a female of mind and excellence, was doomed to the flames by the Protestant archbishop Cranmer, because she believed not the doctrine of the Trinity. A German Anabaptist was sentenced to the stake, because he believed that the Father only was the "very God." Michael Servetus suffered death over a slow fire of green wood, because he had not the same faith with his murderer,

So it was in the days of the Reformation, so called, (a reformation of opinions without a change of practice,) and so it has been ever since. Persecution, cruel as the grave, and relentless as death, has ever pursued those who have had too much independence to subscribe to articles of faith which their consciences and their understandings could not approve. Our "Pilgrim Fathers," even, although they had fled the mother country to escape the persecutions of Episcopacy, and preferred to encounter the dangers of the wilderness and the treachery of savages, rather than yield their rights of conscience to fashion or popularity, very soon exhibited the same ruthless spirit themselves. Witness the imprisonment and punishment to death, of the peace loving and christian Quakers, the burning of witches, and the denunciation of all those whose faith and conduct did not square with the bigoted notions of Salem selectmen, or Boston deacons! It was this spirit that dictated the famous blue laws of Connecticut, which prohibited "food or lodging to be given to a Quaker, Adamite, or other heretic," and even stopped the kiss of maternal affection, as it was about to be imprinted on the lips of childhood, because, forsooth, it was the sabbath day. And is this spirit yet stayed in its ruthless career? Have not the different sects, each some favorite dogma, some peculiar creed which are passwords to

their favor and affection? Has not each christian denomination some mystic word which unlocks the doors and opens the hearts of the initiated, but which is wrath and enmity to the Ephraimite, the uninitiated? The time has passed, it is true, in our land, when any are called on to test their faith by the rack, the gibbet, or the flame. The dungeon and the torture have no terrors for us; but the same spirit which has ever put those engines of bigotry and superstition to work, yet lives, and is at this day exerting its withering influence upon the moral face of this fair country. Let any one look abroad and witness the uncompromising character of sectarism in our land, and he will not fail to discover that the spirit of persecution yet exists in all its pristine malignity. Where is that fellowship of the christian community which gives evidence of the prevalence of the pure and peaceful principles of the gospel? Where is that friendly respect for the opinions of one another, which is indicative of the spread of christian charity and general benevolence? All are swallowed up by the horse leech rapacity of sectarism and proselytism. The duties of social life are neglected. The flow of natural sympathy is turned from its course, and contracted and selfish notions are entertained, instead of the comprehensive precepts and expansive benevolence of the religion of Jesus. Fanaticism, wild and desolating as the sirocco of the desert, and as poisonous as the deadly upas, even now, is sweeping over our land, bringing a desolating blight upon all that is fair, and green, and beautiful in the moral creation. The whirlwind of bigotry and superstition is yet pursuing its devastating course from north to south, and from east to west, rooting up alike the tender floweret, and the sturdy oak, and laying waste the fair fields of reason and intellect.

An enquiry into the cause of these evils is one of interest to every philanthropic bosom, and comes home to every humane heart; for who so insensible to their baneful effects, as not to wish their cause investigated, and if possible, removed! Who so truly dead to the happiness of his fellow creatures, as not to wish that the genius of persecution should be stayed in its ruthless career! To a reflecting mind, it will readily appear, that this spirit is diametrically opposed to the principles of christianity as set forth by the head of the church. Christianity, it is true, has been charged with

the waste produced by the demon of persecution; but let it not be said that such is really the truth of the matter. Let it not be said that because men professing christianity indulge in wickedness, that vice is the legitimate effect of true picty; but rather should we seek for the cause of the evil in the hypocrisy of profession, or in the peculiar system professed. And here we are not liable to err, if the subject is examined dispassionately. If men act in accordance with their belief, and the rule is good that we should "judge the tree by its fruit," we are able unhesitatingly to pronounce on the character of the opinions entertained, from the effects uniformly produced. There is no fact better established than this, that the conduct of mankind is the result of their opinions, modified by circumstances; and the creeds of the different denominations of christians are nothing more than a summary of their opinions, and are, therefore, in some degree, the source or foundation of their conduct. If, therefore, we discover any peculiar spirit prevail, or particular line of conduct pursued, by various classes of professing christians, who differ on many points of faith from one another, the cause of this agreement in spirit and conduct, must be sought for in those articles of faith, or those opinions which are common to such classes.

It is unphilosophical to ascribe two different causes to one and the same effect; and we cannot, therefore, attribute any conduct which is common to many sects, to the difference between those sects, more particularly if their difference of opinion is on minor unessential points, and their agreement is upon a major and essential one. From such premises, just conclusions may be drawn. What then, we would ask, has been the prevailing sentiment of the professedly christian world, during the dark ages and subsequent to them, up to the present hour? What particular tenet of faith has been common to all the different sects, (with one or two exceptions,) which have ever existed on the earth? What sentiment is it, which is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, of the popular systems of religion of the present day? To these queries there can be but one answer. All will admit that the sentiment of "endless punishment" for the impenitent of the human race, is the most prominent one which is common to those systems of religion (so called) which have prevailed most extensively in the world, and even yet are

the most popular. The Calvinist and Arminian, though they cannot interchange the Shibboleth of election and freewill, can equally well pronounce the password of "endless damnation." "They here meet upon the level and part upon the square." Nor are the Catholics, the Lutherans, the Baptists, the Quakers, the Covenanters, the Episcopalians, nor any other denomination, excluded from their right hand of fellowship in this particular. They can all unite in one grand hailing sign, one grand "Shibboleth." The millstone of endless damnation drags all their systems down to the bottom of the abyss, leaving the other commingling fragments of their temples, to float like vanity upon the surface. With them, all religion has lost one of its greatest ornaments and assistants, if the fear of an endless hell is removed out of view. Fought they have, and fight they will, about the shadows of a shade—about matters which have no more important difference than there is between Shibboleth and Sibboleth; but on the neutral ground of endless misery they can meet as friends, as a band of brothers; under the black flag of Beelzebub, they can ratify a treaty of peace, an alliance offensive and defensive.

With these facts looking us in the face, can we for a moment doubt that in the prevalence of this sentiment is to be found the proximate cause of that spirit of persecution of which we have made mention? Can it be a questionable thing, that to this awful doctrine, must be attributed much of the evil which has existed on the earth-much. much of that spirit which seeks to exterminate whatever does not square with the bigoted notions of a patented few? There can be no doubt on the subject, in the mind of any honest enquirer. Reasoning from effects to their cause, or a posteriori, the fact is clear that the doctrines of partiality, which are the joint property of the different denominations which have at various periods wielded the sword of persecution, are the principal causes of those events. By reversing the order of reasoning, and arguing from cause to effect, or a priori, the same satisfactory conclusions are the result. Let us test the principle on this ground also, keeping in view the premises before laid down in regard to

the influence of opinions on conduct.

And what do these classes believe? One class believes that God, by a sovereign decree of his own will "from all

eternity," elected some of the human family to endless bliss, and reprobated the rest to endless condemnation. disciple of this school believes himself to be one of the favorites of heaven, and that he has been selected and distinguished above his fellows, by the sovereign act of Deity, without any merit of his own. And what are the effects of his belief? Will he not love those whom he supposes God loves, and hate those whom he supposes God hates? Will be not conceive that those to whom God has not imparted his grace and salvation are unworthy of his favor and affection likewise? Will not this belief contract the best feelings of his heart, instead of giving him enlarged views of divine goodness, and imparting feelings of universal benevolence towards his fellow men? Will that man be better qualified, by his limited views of the benevolence of Deity, to fulfill the injunction of our Saviour, "love thy neighbor as thyself?" Would not the belief of his being an elected and privileged person, give him more exalted views of himself, and cause him to look down with pride upon his less fortunate neighbor, and virtually say to him "stand by, for I am holier than thou." Surely the natural effects of such a belief would be developed in precisely this manner, if it is permitted to have its natural influence upon the conduct. And what is more, he has indeed acknowledged the truth of the principle, in the sentiment entertained by many of this class, that they think they will be able to look down from the battlements of heaven and view with complacency, their children, friends, and neighbors suffering the torments of the damned in hell. If they can thus think they will have pleasure, after they have gone to the abodes of bliss, can we suppose their conduct would be different here upon earth?

Yet another class of mankind believe that their meritorious works give them a title to heaven and happiness. They spurn the idea of election as taught in the Calvinistic school, and declare that salvation is free to all who will accept the gift bestowed, that the covenant of redemption is universal, and designed for the benefit of all. The foundation here laid is broad enough on which to construct a temple sufficiently capacious for the whole human family, and were the sentiment to stop here, contracted and bigoted notions would not be the result of its belief. Unfortunately however for

this scheme, the great Creator and infinite architect of this foundation, thought proper to declare a contingency in the construction of the edifice, viz: that finite man should build the superstructure himself, on the basis established. And what is the result? The majority of mankind being totally blind from birth, cannot see how to work correctly, and the minority are in no better situation, until their blindness has been removed by the great Master Builder. They are then enabled to build up as much of the wall of good works, as will secure their own protection; and they can look upon their still blinded neighbors, as a set of reprobates, to whom Deity has not thought proper to give vision, and because of this neglect of the great Supreme towards the majority, and favor to the minority, the latter conclude that the former are undeserving of God's goodness; that they are vile sinners and heretics, the objects of everlasting wrath and condemnation. They hence look upon themselves as better workmen than their neighbors, and act in accordance with their aristocratical pretensions. The result is precisely the same as in the case of him who believes in election from all eternity. The advantage and pre-eminence are gained, it matters not whether by the decree of Jehovah alone, or by the combined efforts of the Creator and the creature. same limited and contracted views are the consequence; the same spirit of hatred and persecution results from either sentiment. These two great systems embrace all others, and by consequence, the effects of those not particularly noticed, will not vary except in degree. We have it thus settled, therefore, that the belief of the doctrine of endless misery does tend to keep up the spirit of persecution in the world, and that it has been the main cause of all the evils of this character ever experienced. And yet the tale is not half told! Who can calculate the sum of human misery produced by this cause operating on the more humane feelings of our bosoms? Who can estimate the aggregate of human wretchedness every day experienced, from the awful reflection, that our dearest relatives and friends may be sporting on the brink of perdition, ready to launch away into an abyss of despair? Who can realize the sum of mental anguish which wrings the sensitive bosom on viewing a beloved friend about to embark on a shoreless eternity without a ray of hope to gild the murky prospect? Look at

you heart stricken mother, watching in withering suspense the ebbing out of the spirit of a beloved child, uncertain whether it will be borne on angels' pinions to heaven, or dragged by demons and angels of darkness to the gloomy prison house of hell! Is it not enough that the dear object of her love should be lost to her upon earth, that the hopes of maternal affection should be withered and crushed in their bud, without adding to the utter desolation of her soul. the unwelcome assurance that the farewell she is about to bestow upon her offspring may be an eternal adieu!

And is it of no use to check this comfortless, soul destroying sentiment? Is it of no consequence to soothe the brow of sorrow—no use to pour into the wounded spirit the consolations and the hopes of the gospel of truth, a gospel which is indeed good "tidings of great joy to all people?" Is it of no importance that the veils of fanaticism and superstition should be torn aside, and the light of a glorious immortality be brought to the view of the departing sufferer, and the disconsolate surviving friends? Ye advocates of the horrible doctrine of endless misery! Go out into the world and witness the wreck you have caused, the moral blight you have inflicted upon all that is noble, and pure, and beautiful in creation! Go visit the asylum of the insane, and view the victims you have immolated on the shrine of a blasphemous system! Go and read the fatal scroll of suicidal history, where is enrolled in characters of blood, the fate of sensibility, the destiny of genius, and the blight of beauty; and if your souls do not sicken at the sight and turn with horror from the appalling spectacle, your hearts must be harder than the granite of your hills; a hardness which the arm of omnipotence alone can subdue!

The effects of a belief of the contrary system of doctrines, viz: universal good will and universal salvation founded on the impartial and unchangeable goodness of our Father and God in heaven, are at once peaceful, great and glorious. The individual who looks upon his Creator, as a God of love, and the kind Father of all intelligent creatures, is naturally excited to love him because of his beneficence to himself and his brethren of the human family. This love which is excited in our minds by beholding the glory, beauty, and excellence of our Creator's character, is the very es-

sence of true piety.

L. F. W. A.

We will go yet further. The belief of the doctine of the impartial goodness of Deity, is the reverse of this partial system in its effects upon our conduct towards our fellow-men, as it is a belief in that gospel which is "peace and good will" to all men. It is impossible in the very nature of things that a sincere belief in the doctrine of universal benevolence should lead to persecution or ill will. The distinctions and partialities of other creeds and opinions are not known in the system of universal grace. The whole family of mankind stand upon the same footing, all being under the protection of a kind Father and benefactor, who sendeth rain upon the just and unjust, and whose mercy is over all the works of The veriest sinner that ever lived, is recognized by this system, as the "prodigal son," whose return to the happiness and friendship of his father's house, is the subject of the anxious and affectionate solicitude of all his brethren. For him the "fatted calf" is ready for the slaughter, and the sound of music and rejoicing greet the penitent. Nor is the general joy interrupted by the envy or malevolence of any self righteous elder brother, but love, universal and disinterested, presides over the gladsome scene. This is the only system which harmonizes the attributes of Deity, and preserves unimpaired, his infinite wisdom, power, goodness, It is the only system which is based upon the foundation laid by Christ himself, viz: "Love to God and our neighbor," on which "hang all the law and the prophets." Throughout this system the very spirit of christianity manifests itself in all its force and moral energy. It extends the olive branch of peace, and the clangor of strife is hushed to silence; it touches the superstitions of the heaen, and the cruel car of Juggernaut is stayed in its progress; it breathes its philanthropy over the world, and the cruelty and the oppression of bigotry and intolerance vanish "like the mists of the morning;" it binds up the bleeding wounds of persecution, and anoints with the health giving balm of life and salvation; it dispels the gloom of the grave and surrounds the tomb with a halo of immortality, bright, glorious, and beatific! That such a spirit may prevail "from the rising to the setting of the sun" and "from the river even unto the ends of the earth," is the devout prayer of every humane man and sincere christian. Reader-can you join with heartfelt sincerity in such a supplication?

ART. XVI.

The Phrases, Born again, New Creature, &c.

1. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. -—Jонн iii, 3.

Notwithstanding Nicodemus seemed perplexed by this expression, it still appears that the phraseology was familiar enough to the Jews, and that it had obtained among them a well known meaning. By them it was employed to denote any important change of one's religion, character, office or condition, such as the renunciation of idolatry, the forsaking of vice, and especially the conversion of a proselyte from the heathen nations to Judaism. Dr. Lightfoot says, "the Jews acknowledged, in order to proselytism, some kind of regeneration or new birth absolutely necessary; but then this was very slightly and easily attainable." And for authority, he quotes the following as one of their sayings: "If any one becomes a proselyte, he is like a child new born." Schoettgen likewise asserts that "the mystery of regeneration or new birth was not wholly unknown to the ancient Jews; as appears from the circumstance that they used the phrase, a new creature. Thus, they say of Abraham, when he renounced idolatry and was chosen by God, He was made a new creature. Other instances to the same purpose, will

If am unwilling to omit the following remarks of Dr. Lightfoot on this passage, notwithstanding they do not relate to the phrases under consideration: "We must not suppose it a set discourse merely, and on purpose directed upon the subject of regeneration, though the doctrine of the new birth may be well enough asserted and explained from hence. But the question is about the aptitude and capacity of the man qualified to be a partaker of the kingdom of God, or of heaven, or of the times or benefits of the Messiah; for that the kingdom of God or of heaven, are terms convertible in the evangelist, is obvious to every one who will take the pains to compare them; and that by the kingdom of God or of heaven is meant the kingdom and times of the Messiah, is so plain that it needs no argument to prove it. When, therefore, there was so vehement and universal an expectation of the coming and reign of the Messiah amongst the Jews; and when some token and indication of these times might appear to Nicodemus in the miracles that Christ had wrought; our Saviour instructs him by what way and means he may be made apt and capable for seeing and entering into this kingdom, and enjoying the benefits and advantages of Messiah's days."—Lightfoot's Hore Heb. et Talmud. in loco.

²Lightfoot's Horæ Heb. et Talmud. on John iii. 3.

be adduced when we come to 2 Cor. v, 17. --- The later Jews express themselves as follows: He who repents, must become like a new born child."

Such having been the usage of this phraseology, it was natural that our Saviour should employ it in a similar sense, to apprize Nicodemus that a conversion even from Judaism was as necessary to the reception of the gospel, on the one hand, as was a conversion from heathenism, to admission into the commonwealth of Israel, on the other. In this latter case, the Jews were accustomed to say that the proselyte became as a child new born; contrary to all their expectations, they themselves were now required to pass through a similar new birth, in order to become subjects of their Mes-

siah's kingdom.

But here it will perhaps be asked, How could Nicodemus, a master in Israel, mistake this phraseology, if it was so well understood by the Jews? We suspect that what he mistook was not so much the phraseology, as its relation to himself and his countrymen. One fact is manifest in the very nature of things: he could not really suppose that our Saviour intended the absurd idea which he affected to give the expression, "born again." And it is worthy of particular notice, that in the explanation immediately subjoined, Christ invariably retained the word "born," without either dropping or defining the figure, as though that had occasioned no difficulty to his hearer; and he finally demanded, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" thus intimating that the language was intelligible enough to a well informed Jew. The following considerations may perhaps account for the cavil in Nicodemus's answer, and at the same time discover in what his real ignorance consisted: He was aware that there must be what was popularly called a new birth, in those that came over from the Gentiles to the Jewish religion; but that another similar conversion from this religion, was necessary, in order to introduce one into the Messiah's kingdom, was a supposition, the possibility of which had never entered his mind. When therefore the "teacher come from God" required that he and his brethren should thus he born again, or proselytized, he was confounded. They were already pious Israelites, thor-

¹Schoettgenii Horæ Heb. et Talmud. in John iii, 3.

oughly instructed in the knowledge and practice of what was supposed the perfection of godliness, and entitled, as children of Abraham, to be the subjects of the Messiah; and in reference to these characters, he could not conceive either the propriety or the manner of such a new birth. Being perplexed by the subject, he sought, like many an opponent in similar difficulties, to construe the language into the greatest imaginable absurdity; and this he did, not because he was ignorant of its accustomed meaning, but because he understood not how it could be applied to the case in view.

2. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.—2 Cor. v, 17.

The latter clause in this text alludes, perhaps, to the thorough change of religion then taking place, from the old Jewish and Gentile institutions on the one hand, to the Christian system on the other. In this last dispensation, all things were new, both its doctrine and its practice; and he who came over to it, was, in the same sense, a new creature. There was, indeed, no metamorphosis of his nature; but his views were changed, his notions of duty corrected, and the general tenor of his life renovated. He became what we denominate, even to this day, in familiar discourse, a new man.

It is easy to see that a change similar in principle, though not the same in circumstances, must have attended the sincere proselytes from idolatry to the Jewish religion. Accordingly, we find that the Jews were accustomed to call them new creatures; and since the cotemporary usage of the term helps to account for its occurrence in the New Testament, and furnishes the probable standard for its interpretation, we shall insert a few instances. Abraham, they said, was made a new creature in forsaking the service of idols for that of God. Schoettgen quotes from their ancient writers the maxims that Proselytes to the true religion, that is, to the law, are said to have their souls created anew; and that He who converts another to the law, does virtually create him." Indeed, they used this figure to denote any remarkable change of character, employment, or relation in life. Thus, they said that He whose sins are blotted out, is made a new creature; that the Priest, at his consecration

and entrance on his office, was made a new creature, by the oil with which he was anointed, that is, he was thus set apart to a new occupation; that Abraham, on the birth of Ishmael, was made a new creature, that he should beget sons

and become great over all."

From such examples it is evident, that the phrase in question was then used with the same latitude of meaning, which it now bears in our ordinary conversation; and that nothing can be more absurd than to build upon it the doctrine of a miraculous transformation of our nature.

H. B. 2d.

ART. XVII.

"A Rich Man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of

Heaven."

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."—MATT. XIX, 23.

This text is generally understood to teach a peculiar difficulty, almost an impossibility, for a rich man to become truly religious. And the next words, as they are commonly interpreted, confirm this impression: "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." What can be more evident, it will be asked, than that Christ here meant to teach that it was a very difficult thing indeed for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God; and that although it was possible for God to bring about such an event, yet it was a case of very

¹Schoettgenii Horæ Heb. et Talmud. in 2 Cor. v, 17.

rare occurrence! We frankly acknowledge that this is, without doubt, the plain meaning of the words; but it does not follow that they intimate any peculiar difficulty in a rich man's being converted to the belief of christianity, or becoming truly pious.

What then did Christ mean, what is the general truth he intended to assert, in the passage under consideration? Nothing more is necessary to a satisfactory answer, than a clear understanding of the general circumstances in which

the expression was uttered.

It is a fact, not generally considered, perhaps, that during his personal ministry, Christ admitted into his "little flock," none but such as actually forsook all their earthly possessions, and followed him in his travels from place to place, or went forth, at his command, to preach, without any pecuniary recompence whatever. When he called Peter and Andrew, James and John, they left their nets, and followed him; when he called Matthew the publican, he left his office at the receipt of custom; when a certain scribe proposed to follow him withersoever he went, Christ warned him of the consequent hardships, saying, "the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;" when one of his disciples asked leave to go and bury his father, the reply was, "Follow me and let the dead bury their dead." In short, the rule which he established, and which he exacted to the very letter, was, "whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." And the wisdom of so rigorous a rule, in that critical juncture, is evident from the consideration that a few devoted servants who had already broken every tie upon the world, must have been more efficient in his cause, than thousands of lukewarm and timid advocates, who had to compromise between their stern duty and the safety, the conveniences and blandishments of life. He foresaw, too, that the time would soon come, when the sacrifice must inevitably be made; and he knew that they who would not submit to it at first, would likewise fail him in the hour of trial, and bring disgrace on the cause they attempted to support. The sacrifice was therefore required of them at the outset, that they might at once give a pledge of their devotedness, and strip themselves of every encumbrance.

Under such conditions, it was, of course, extremely difficult to induce the rich to become his disciples and enter his kingdom. They might indeed believe on him, and favor his cause; they might observe the moral precepts he taught, and secretly practise his religion. But all this alone, though it rendered them good men, in their private sphere, did not adequately fit them for the momentous duty to which the servants of his rising kingdom were then called. The rich, least of all, could be expected to throw themselves utterly destitute and unfriended into an undertaking where hatred and persecution were the certain reward, and death the probable end. Therefore, in the striking language of our Saviour, it was "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. With men, it was impossible; but with God, all things

were possible."

That we have correctly explained this passage, is evident from the very next words: "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore?" We ought also to mention the particular incident, as it is related by Matthew, Mark and Luke, which gave rise to all this conversation: a certain ruler came and asked Christ what he should do to have eternal life; and was answered, "keep the commandments." All these, said he, have I kept from my youth up. "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, take up the cross and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions." It is evident that this was a good man, in the true sense of that term, and as such beloved by Jesus. But he was not perfect. He wanted that fortitude and self devoting zeal necessary to meet the trying exigency of our Saviour's cause. He could not descend at once, from opulence to absolute poverty, and exchange a fixed residence for the wandering life of a disciple.

H. B. 2d.

ART. XVIII.

Importance and best Method of Studying the Original Languages of the Scriptures.

Dissertations on the Importance and best Method of Studying the Original Languages of the Bible. By Jahn and others. Translated from the Originals, and accompanied with Notes. By M. Stuart, Associate Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover.—Andover, 1821.

WE have expressed our conviction, in former numbers of this work, 1 that the bare knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, is not, at present, of that paramount advantage to the clear understanding of the Bible, which many suppose. Other acquirements, within the reach of the common people, are, we think, much more important to this purpose. An acquaintance with the polity, opinions, modes of expression and customs of the ancient Jews, and with the circumstances, historical, and geographical amid which the Scriptures were written, is the learning that appears to us of the most avail in explaining their current meaning. And this kind of learning, though so generally disregarded that the community seems hardly to understand its use, may now be acquired, to a very good extent, by the mere English reader. It might easily be rendered of still more convenient access to the public at large; as, no doubt, it actually will be, whenever the people become aware how much broader and more satisfactory is the light reflected on the sacred volume from this quarter, than are the scattered rays which the lexicon can throw upon our common translation.

But here let us not be misunderstood. Our object is, not to discourage the study of the languages with such as have the necessary time to spare, but to moderate certain extravagant expectations on the subject. We suppose it manifest enough, from the very nature of the case, that a knowledge of the original, when not allowed to supersede other means of greater utility, must be of considerable advantage. Who does not see that, for every purpose of study, the original, if understood, is preferable to a copy? Its peculiar forms of expression,

which cannot always be transferred into another language, convey with more exactness the precise idea intended, especially as to its nicer lights and shades; and it should not be overlooked, that these delicate modifications may essentially affect the main idea itself. Translators, it is well known, sometimes mistake the meaning, either wholly or in part. Their grosser blunders, however, are not always the most pernicious. More is to be feared from the obscurity or perplexity in which they frequently leave the connexion of their author's thoughts, and from their being obliged almost perpetually to sink allusions that are important to the sense. Now, some of these defects, such as arise from the want of correspondence between ancient and modern idioms, will be avoided by a familiar use of the original; and in other cases, the scholar, though liable indeed to the same errors as the translator, will yet have the satisfaction of judging for himself, and the means of correcting his mistakes.

We have a strong persuasion that the circumstances of the times call much more loudly than heretofore, on the preachers of our denomination to apply themselves to this branch of learning, at least as an accomplishment, if not as a qualification in itself absolutely requisite. Relying on their favorable interpretation of our motives, we venture to recommend the study to our younger brethren who have yet leisure for new acquisitions, and to those especially who intend to enter the ministry; hoping that we shall not appear, in so doing, to assume an invidious supervision over the pursuits of others, nor seem to affect, on our own part, a scholarship in which we acknowledge our deficiency. It is beyond all doubt, that the public is making a progress in education unparalleled in the past experience of our country; and the circumstance warns us to beware lest we fall behind, in the advancing movement. A system of means is fast coming into operation, which, if successful, will raise the community to a far more elevated standard of instruction than it has hitherto attained. We rejoice in the prospect; but it certainly becomes us to provide in season for the approaching state of things. We scarcely need remind our brethren that a regular and settled ministry, in order to retain its hold unimpaired on the more cultivated part of society, must keep pace with the general improvement of the age. And this improvement is as manifestly going on in the

cause of Biblical learning, the appropriate province of the divine, as in any science whatsoever. To say nothing of its other branches, the study of the original languages is growing much more common among the great body of ministers of all denominations in the United States. Formerly, it was almost confined to those of the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Episcopalians; but of late years, that numerous sect, the Calvinistic Baptists, has made it a subject of constantly increasing attention; and now the Methodists, still more numerous, are introducing their preachers to its advantages. Let our brethren who have just entered the ministry, and those who are about to enter, look forward, and say, whether the appearance does not indicate that, ere their race be run, they will be left alone in the rear, if they neglect what so naturally belongs to their profession. They should consider that the people whom they are to address, are, generally speaking, as far advanced in improvement, to say the least, as those of most other de-nominations; and that they will be likely to require a corresponding degree of cultivation on the part of their teachers.

Those who have not the opportunity of a regular public education, may nevertheless come directly to this study, through the medium of the English Grammars and Lexicons both of the Greek and Hebrew, lately published in our country. 1 With regard to the easiest method of acquiring those languages, or indeed any other, we are furnished with some use-

1 Of the Greek, there are Grammars in abundance in almost every bookstore. The Lexicon most convenient for learning the language, is probably the late American work on the basis of Schrevelius, said to be translated by the Hon. J. Pickering, under the title of 'The Greek Lexicon of Schrevelius, translated into English. With many additions.' The second edition, however, is the best, which may be found under the following title, 'A Greek and English Lexicon, adapted to the authors read in the colleges and schools of the United States, and to other Greek Classics.' Loveland's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament is a cheap and conventional conventional conventions and the second convention of the New Testament is a cheap and conventional conventions. ient pocket companion, for such as have already made some progress in the language. Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon is not well calculated for be-

Of the Hebrew, without points, Wilson's Introduction, as a Grammar, of the Hebrew, without points, wilson's Introduction, as a Grammar, and Pike's Lexicon, are very cheap, and will answer the purpose. So will Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon, which contains a Grammar; but it is comparatively dear. The Hebrew, however, as now taught at our theological schools and colleges, is generally learned with the Masoratic points, which, though they add much to the tediousness of the study, are said to render the language more definite. Professor Stuart's Hebrew Grammar, and Professor Gibbs' translation of Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon, are used, and are probably the best

probably the best.

ful directions in the work which is mentioned at the head of this article, and which consists of translations from Jahn, Michaelis, Gesenius and Wyttenbach, and of notes by Professor Stuart. The unanimous opinion of such judges, so well qualified by experience to advise on the subject, is entitled to peculiar deference. Dr Jahn of Vienna is known in this country as the author of 'Biblical Archæology.' In Germany he has acquired a distinguished reputation by a multitude of works, several of which are elementary books on the oriental languages. Professor Gesenius of Halle stands acknowledged the best Hebrew scholar in Europe. The celebrated Michaelis, Professor at Goettingen, bore, in his day, the palm of oriental learning. Wyttenbach was an eminent Professor of Greek in the University of Leyden.

They earnestly recommended it, as the essential principle of their method, that, through all the course of this study, the memory be left at ease and freedom, in every stage; and that the language be acquired, not by violent efforts to commit to rote, but by the leisurely perusal and re-perusal of lessons. They would have us follow, as far as the case permits, the process which children naturally pursue in learning their vernacular tongue. On this general idea, Jahn makes the follow-

ing very sensible remarks;

'In those places where two languages are spoken, most children, at a very early period, learn them both with the same facility. A boy of eight, ten, or twelve years old, residing for a year or two in a foreign country, easily learns its vernacular tongue. In fact, a child from the age of two to six years, will learn at least four vernacular languages without any difficulty, and as a matter of amusement, if he be educated by men who speak these different languages, and speak no other while they are with him.

Hence it is manifest, that to learn languages is not a difficult task in itself; it is made so, only by the method in which they are studied. Adults are unwilling to imitate children, in their mode of learning them. They refuse to proceed along with a moderate gait, and to go as it were on foot, and leisurely; but are desirous to pass over hills and mountains at a single leap. They are unwilling to ply their task with assiduity, and unweariedly. They do not hear and read with sufficient attention, nor repeat as often as is necessary. They do not give that liberty to the memory which is indispensable, but force it, in order to learn things by rote. They do not accustom themselves, as children do, to associate with every word the thing which it designates. In fine, in a great variety of respects, they adopt a method of study, which serves rather to

hinder than to help them. . .

Let us now examine the difficulties which occur in the study of the Oriental languages, and investigate the causes of them; so that we may learn how to remove, or at least to diminish Experience teaches us, that there are three difficulties attending this subject. Two of these are of a grammatical nature; one of which arises from the great difference between the Oriental characters or letters and ours; the other, from the inflexions of words that are to be impressed upon the memory, which, however, is not very formidable, as the inflexions in the Oriental languages are far less numerous than in the Occidental ones. The third difficulty exists in the languages themselves, in which there are so many words that nearly resemble each other; so many meanings of words, designated in various ways; so many phrases altogether different from any in the Occidental tongues; all of which must be im-

pressed on the memory of the learner.

'A greater difficulty than any of these arises, no doubt, from the violence which learners are accustomed to do to the faculty of memory, when they earnestly strive to learn everything by rote, or at least to retain it in their memory. By efforts of this nature which are overstrained, they fatigue the memory, deprive it of its natural vigor, and debilitate it; whence it comes, that they remember what they obtain in this manner with the greatest difficulty, and of course easily forget it. memory loves freedom, and is refreshed, nourished, and strengthened by it. In a state of freedom, it easily treasures up anything; but when violence is done to it, it is burdened and weakened, so that what is obtruded upon it easily escapes. Daily experience affords satisfactory proof of this. When we charge the memory with something to be done on the morrow, it often happens that we forget it; but if, without striving to impress the memory, we request some one to remind us of what is to be done, the admonition for the most part becomes unnecessary, for we easily recollect it. So it often happens, moreover, that we labor hard to recall something to memory, and the more we labor, the more unable are we to recollect it; but when we abstain from the effort, after a short interval, the memory being restored to its liberty, of its own accord recalls what we desire. On the other hand, we often strive to forget something which is disagreeable; but all in vain, for it perpetually harasses the memory even when this faculty is feeble.

One might almost say, (as Themistocles did to a person who boasted that he could teach the art of remembering,) 'I had rather learn the art of forgetting; for I remember what I do not wish to remember, and cannot forget what I wish to forget.'

'Since it is clear then, that the memory grows strong by the enjoyment of freedom, but is oppressed and weakened by violence, it cannot be denied, that if those who study languages strenuously labor to commit everything to memory, they will render their progress much more difficult than it will be, if they pursue a course which leaves the memory more at liberty.

'The memory, therefore, must be left free, that it may retain its natural force and vigor, so as to receive impressions voluntarily, deeply engrave them, and easily preserve them. Such is the case with little children, who spontaneously learn any language, and often do it by way of amusement. Languages, should be learned by efforts that are free, and often repeated, rather than by violent efforts. This is a point which cannot be too strongly urged. Little children, for example, whose minds are unembarrassed and free from any violence, by constantly hearing others speak, soon attempt to express their own ideas in a similar way. In like manner, adults who learn languages from books, with a similar freedom of mind, should daily read, repeat again and again the reading, hear others read, write out what they read, and peruse and re-peruse it, and assiduously persevere in this exercise of repeating, until what is read be deeply engraven upon the memory.

'When I speak, however, of assiduously persevering in this exercise, I do not wish to be understood as urging to continue it for whole days, or even many hours, without intermission; for this would fatigue, and weaken, and oppress the memory, and impede the progress of the student, rather than accelerate it. Care should be taken, therefore, not to urge the work without interruption, beyond a proper length of time. I should advise any one, not to apply himself more than one or two hours, without remission; and then, after attending to other

business, or exercise, to return again to his task.

'For example; a part of an author, which has already been studied, and is understood, should be attentively read three or four times over, without any intermission; then, after attending to other occupations, or after an interval of one night, let the same passage be read as many times more; and this not merely mentally, but read aloud, so as to be distinctly and audibly pronounced. It is almost incredible, how much the reading aloud, so often repeated, will assist the learner. The reason of it is evident, viz. that the mind is affected not only by

the letters which the eye sees, but by the sounds which enter the ear; and thus, from the united agency of both causes, it receives stronger impressions, than it could from the agency of only one, and therefore more easily retains what is impressed upon it.' pp. 31—34.

Having thus furnished the reader with the essential principle on which these authors insist, we may now point out the order, the beginning and the successive steps, to be observed in the course of study. They advise that, in the first place, the learner barely look over the Grammar, but attentively, so as to acquire some general notion of the inflexions of the language, and then enter immediately on the exercise of translating. It is a great loss of time, says Michaelis, first to teach how to decline and conjugate with entire facility and correctness; then to treat of all the anomalous forms of the language, and to urge on the study of these, before beginning to translate. Such a method only delays, quenches the spirit of the student, and takes away all pleasure and satisfaction. This incessant grammatical hammering is not adapted to students.

In the second place, when the learner has thus entered on the work of translating, they recommend that he pursue it in connexion with the study of the Grammar. But as the Grammar will always be found the driest and most repulsive part of his task, he is still directed not to aim at committing it either

too speedily or too laboriously. Jahn says,

'The whole grammar is not to be exhausted at once; for in this way, the labor becomes tedious and troublesome to a learner, and in a great measure useless; for learners cannot remember dry grammatical precepts, until they have occasion to make use of them, by the recurrence of examples. At first then, those parts of the Grammar are to be selected, which are specially important; in particular, the Paradigms of inflexions, omitting the exceptions and anomalies. These and many other things comprised in a grammar are to be read and studied in private, and committed as occasion may require, or leisure permit; and then, whenever it is necessary, to be adduced in order to illustrate or confirm interpretation. In this way, as they will occur in the midst of other things which have no similitude to them, and in examples where the interpretation requires the use of them, they will very easily be remembered. By constant exercises of this nature, above all if the

proper repetition of them be kept up, (a thing which can never be too much recommended,) the study of the languages will be relieved from difficulty, and rendered practicable and easy 'p, 39.

And with regard to the way by which the arbitrary and difficult forms of grammar, as well as its easier parts, may be most readily impressed on the memory, the general principle already laid down for the whole course of study, must still be kept in view: perusal, re-perusal, reading aloud and transcription; and not violent efforts to commit to rote by a single process.

'In a word,' says Jahn, 'as frequent repetition is the soul of all studies, so it is, in a special manner, of the study of languages. By this, not only language itself, but Grammar also Nothing more is requisite to accomplish this, is to be learned. than that the Paradigms of the inflexions should be frequently read, and other words declined agreeably to them. Let this exercise of inflexion, moreover, be written down. Why should the student reluctate at this, when it will soon become a mere amusement to him? Universal experience teaches, that the writing down of Paradigms, and parts of speech which are well understood, contributes very much to the learning of the dead languages. And the reason of this is plain; for in the act of writing, we delay a longer time upon every letter which we make, than when we merely read. Hence the impression upon the mind is more powerful; for the longer any cause operates, the more powerful is the effect. . . .

'In learning the Grammar of any language, what occasions the most trouble is the multitude of things which resemble each other, and follow on in close connexion. Similitude occasions. confusion; and where similitude exists between a great many words, the memory is apt to retain them only in a confused manner; although it easily retains a great number of things, if they are definitely distinguished; or in case they are similar, provided they occur or are presented successively, at intervals and after what had gone before is well understood. An example will explain my meaning. If a military commander should call by name, and make to pass in review before me, 23 soldiers in uniform both as to dress and arms, I should scarcely remember the name of a single individual so as to repeat it, in case I met him afterwards. In like manner, if the 28 forms of the Hebrew letters, or the equal number of verbal inflexions, are presented continuously, scarcely any one will be remem-

bered. But suppose a military commander summons five or six of the soldiers daily to appear before me, and gives me time to consider the different form and stature of each individual; tells me how this one and that received the wounds which occasioned his scars; what one and another achieved in such or such a battle, or in the assault of such a city; what are the dispositions, virtues, and vices, of each individual; and then shows me the spoils which each one has borne away in triumph from the enemy; and finally adds something respecting the arrangement of the army in each battle or assault; all these things I shall remember, because they are so unlike each other, and entirely distinct. The consequence will be, that I shall easily distinguish between the 28 soldiers who are brought before me as above described, learn to call them by name, and retain in my memory the different facts which are descriptive of each. So, if a similar method be pursued in regard to Hebrew letters, vowel-points, diacritical signs, and inflexions of words, all these may be impressed upon the memory without any difficulty. Therefore, in going through with the Grammar, a great number of things of the same kind, or very similar to each other, should never be continuously presented, much less without explaining wherein the difference consists between them and the things which have preceded. When similars are presented, the individual characteristics of each should be noted, and then things dissimilar and of another kind should be subjoined. In the arrangement of a Grammar, systematic order must be pursued, so as to render it convenient for consultation; but teachers and learers should by no means be confined to this order, unless they mean to create much useless trouble for the memory. pp. 34-37.

Such is the way in which he advises that the Grammar be studied. Let it, however, be particularly mentioned again, that these lessons on the Grammar are not to be pursued continuously, but interspersed in the more important as well as more grateful exercise of translating or construing.

'Reading and interpretation, in all study of languages,' says Jahn, 'is the great object in view; and to this, everything else must be subordinate. Study should be so conducted, then, that not only passages which are read should be frequently reperused, but that a great deal should be read and explained. Both of these objects are perfectly consistent with each other. All languages are learned by use; and the use of the dead languages must be acquired in the way of repetition and frequent

reading. All real progress in the dead languages most certainly depends on the exercise of interpreting them. Wherefore, as I have said above, we should not delay for a long time, upon the study of Grammar alone; but after getting possession of the general and fundamental principles and forms, leave the exceptions, syntax, &c. to come in as occasion may call, and proceeding directly to the exercise of translating, which will constantly afford occasion for reference to all the unstudied parts of the Grammar. If any one should commit a whole Grammar to memory, and neither read nor interpret the language, he cannot be acquainted with it. But he who reads and interprets a great deal, learns Grammar, of course, just as little children obtain a practical knowledge of grammar by learning their vernacular tongue. Grammar is merely the medium of learning languages with more facility; but the medium is not to be so commuted for the ultimate end, that more pains should be bestowed on the former than on the latter. I am not ignorant, indeed, that a knowledge of every part of Grammar is necessary, for any one thoroughly to understand a language. All which I mean to deny, (and this I would strenuously denv,) is, that a knowledge of the whole is necessary for the tyro. If such an one understands the rudiments of Grammar, at the outset, by practice he will come to a knowledge of the rest. A complete knowledge of Grammar must spring from an extensive acquaintance with the language itself. It follows, therefore, that in teaching and learning the languages, the great thing to be aimed at is the constant and ready interpretation of them. When progress in this is uninterrupted, addition is continually made to the stock of words, whose meaning is known, and which occur in various forms, and with different significations, and in different constructions. In this way, they are not only engraved more deeply upon the memory, but the analogy and idiom of the language is better understood.'

pp. 42-43.

Let this suffice, as to the general plan and order of the study. We would now revert once more to what these authors so much insist on, as the fundamental principle of their method, viz. repetition, and the free pleasurable action of the memory. 'The best means for the student,' says Gesenius, 'is, to read often and aloud those passages which he understands.' To help the memory,' says Michaelis, 'after he has written out the translation, let him write the original under it, or in a separate book. This practice, at least in respect to the more

difficult passages, should be continued for some time, until the learner has acquired considerable dexterity in translating; and so, by degrees, he will impress upon the memory, words, phrases and constructions? 'It will be of great use,' says Jahn, 'in the acquisition of the oriental tongues, if they are agreeable to us, and we feel interested in them. Books, therefore, should be selected for study, which treat of things that are worthy of being studied and known, and contain knowledge which is not common, or which allure by their argument, or delight by their eloquent diction.' Repetition, says Wyttenbach, 'is to be continually practised, and has an incredible effect in assisting the progress; but it must be a real and thorough review; that is, it must be again and again repeated. What I choose is this: that every day, the task of the preceding day should be reviewed; at the end of every week, the task of the week; at the end of every month, the studies of the month.

With regard to the success attending this method, Wyttenbach appeals to his own experience. After a wandering course of unsatisfactory and comparatively unprofitable study, says he,

'I at length recollected the pleasure which I took, when a boy, in the study of Greek, and I began to look round for some book that I had formerly read. I took down from my shelves the little work of Plutarch on the Education of Children, and read it once. I then went through it a second time. This was truly a task, and was far from affording me any pleasure. From Plutarch I betook myself to Herodian, which gave me rather more pleasure, but still did not satisfy me. Then, as by chance, I met with a copy of Ernesti's edition of the Memorabilia of Xenophon, an author whom I had as yet known merely by name; and I was wonderfully captivated with the indescribable suavity of that author; and yet I was not so fully sensible of his excellence at this time, as I was afterwards. In reading and studying this work, I made it a rule never to begin a section without re-perusing the preceding one, nor a chapter nor book, without going over the preceding chapter and book a second time; and finally, after having finished the work in that manner, I again read the whole in course. This was a labor of almost three months; but such constant repetition proved most beneficial to me. The effect of repetition seemed to be, that when I proceeded from a section or chapter. which I had read twice, to a new one, I acquired an impulse which bore me along through all opposing obstacles; like a vessel, (to use Cicero's comparison in a similar case,) which having once received an impulse from the oar, continues on her course even after the mariners have suspended their ex-

ertions to propel her.

I have, therefore constantly adhered to this practice of repeating or reviewing. After having thus acquired some knowledge of the Greek language, and by means of Ernesti's short notes become acquainted in some measure with the principles of interpretation as well as with books, I resolved to devote myself to Greek literature; and from that time I commenced the reading of the Greek authors. I began with Homer's Iliad, of which, while a boy, I had read about an hundred lines in the first book. I read it at this time in the same manner as I had done Xenophon's Memorabilia,—that is, continually repeating each portion that I studied; and I finished the whole in two months. I regretted that I had used Schrevelius; for by following him, I was led into very many errors, to correct which, afterwards cost me much time and labor. that I had then known and enjoyed the benefit of being directed by the light of the Hemsterhusian method, which is now enjoyed in the schools of Holland and is accessible to you; and so much the more sure you may now be of making a proficiency in your studies, as your advantages are greater

than mine were in my youth. But to return.

I proceeded with Homer, rather because it was necessary than because I found it agreeable; for I was not yet sensible of the powers of that divine poet. I have known other young persons experience the same thing; the cause of which I afterwards understood, but it would be tiresome here to explain it I therefore, took up Xenophon in conjunction with Homer, and gave the greatest portion of my time to his works, which I almost devoured; so easy were they to me, that I was rarely obliged to use a Lexicon, for everything was intelligible from the connexion of the sentence. I had, moreover, a Latin translation, which was of use to me at my age, but never is to boys at school. I thus went through all the works of Xenophon (except the Memorabilia) four times in four months. now began to think there was no author that would not be easy to me; and I took up Demosthenes. I had an edition with the Greek text only, accompanied with the Greek notes of Wolfius. Alas! darkness itself! But I had learned not to be deterred on the first approach, and I persevered. I found greater difficulties than ever, both in the words and in the extent of the orator's propositions; but, at last, after much labor I reached the end of the first Olynthiac. I then read it a second and a third time; when everything appeared clear; but still I found

nothing of those powers of eloquence of which we hear so much. I doubted at this time whether I should venture upon another of his orations, or should review again the one which I just read; I decided, however, to review it; and (how wonderful are the effects of this practice, which can never be sufficiently recommended!) as I read, a new and unknown feeling took possession of my mind. Hitherto in reading the Greek authors, I had experienced only that pleasure which arose from understanding their meaning and the subjects discussed by them, and from observing my own proficiency. But in reading Demosthenes, an unusal and more than human emotion pervaded my mind, and grew stronger upon every successive perusal. I could now see the orator at one time all ardor; at another, in anguish; and at another, borne away by an impulse which nothing could resist. And as I proceed, the same ardor begins to be kindled within myself, and I am carried away by the same impulse. I feel a greater elevation of soul, and am no longer the same man; I fancy that I am Demosthenes himself standing before the assembly, delivering this oration, and exhorting the Athenians to emulate the bravery and glory of their ancestors; and now, I can no longer read the oration silently as at first, but aloud; to which I am insensibly impelled, by the strength and fervor of the sentiments, as well as by the power of oratorical harmony.

Pursuing this method, I read almost all the orations of Demosthenes in the course of three months; and by this means being the better qualified to understand the Grecian writers, I was more than ever delighted with Homer, and soon finished reading him; after which I employed myself more advantageously upon other authors. The next I began was Plato, with whose works I am persuaded I never should have been so much captivated, if I had not brought to them an ardor, which was ever the more ready to kindle in consequence of the

excitement produced by the study of Demosthenes.'

pp. 56—59.

H. B. 2d.

ART, XIX.

The Law of Retaliation.

In this short essay on the law of retaliation, we shall first examine the nature of those provocations on which it professes to be founded. These provocations are found in such wrongs as men practise on their fellow beings, without being

provoked so to do by any previous injury received.

But as no act of man can ever be produced without some cause to which it owes those volitions without which it could not be performed, we shall do well to inquire, in the first place, why men are induced to injure their fellow beings, without having from them received some provocation. This inquiry is thought to be important, because it is a most evident fact that unless we know the cause of a moral disorder we shall hardly know by what prescription it may be removed. The better to succeed in this undertaking, let us first clearly understand that man never acts but from motive. We will consider some very simple circumstances. Suppose then, a person is comfortably seated in his own house; will he ever rise from his seat? Never until some motive induces him to do so. And though all the motive which operates to induce him to leave his seat, may consist solely in the circumstance that he grows weary of sitting, yet this may be entirely sufficient to cause him to rise and to walk. If neither this nor any other motive should have a greater influence on him than the desire to sit still, he would remain where he is. If a man were standing outside of his own door, he would never enter his house without being induced so to do by the force of some motive. And though there might be no other motive than simply to be relieved from the fatigue of standing, yet this might be quite sufficient to cause him to leave his position, and to seek rest by his fireside.

From these very simple instances, we may advance to the consideration of all the enterprises in which we find men to be engaged. All, connected with agriculture, mechanic arts, or commerce, will be found to owe their origin to the principle here laid down. Whatever is connected with government and laws, with the acquisition of science or knowledge, and indeed, all which is undertaken by man, follows the same rule.

But what motive is it that induces one man to injure another who has given him no provocation? In order to understand the root of a proper solution of this question, and in order to see the whole subject in a profitable light, it is necessary first to understand that all motives, which induce men to action, have their origin in the same source. This source is want. If men wanted nothing, if they desired nothing, they would do nothing. Want then is the source from which all motives derive their power. There are, beside, many considerations of a relative nature, which must be taken into the account of what makes one particular object to be preferred to another; but if want be removed, no motive to action can derive any force from any circumstance whatever, or even exist.

The thief steals another man's property. This is an injury done by one man to another. The thief was not provoked to inflict this wrong on his fellow being, by having previously been injured by him. But he wants the property, and he thinks he can possess himself of it by stealing it, in an easier way than by honest labor, or by a proper application to honorable employment. The highwayman meets a stranger, and demands his money, presenting, at the same time, a deadly weapon at his breast. He does this to avenge no wrong which he has previously suffered from the hand of this stranger. But he wants money, and he thinks this the easiest method to obtain it. A man may be stung with envy at the prosperity of his neighbor. He has received no injury from him; but as he wants to be as well off, if not better, his envy will endeavor to bring the prosperous man to his own level.

We need not further extend our inquiries concerning the wrongs which men do to each other without the pretence of justifying themselves by reference to wrongs previously received; but we may now proceed to consider what we deem a no less wrong, in which the agent justifies himself on the

grounds of what he calls sufficient provocation.

Notwithstanding it is common for men to justify themselves in doing injuries to such as have injured them, under the pretence that they are authorised so to do because of those injuries which they have received, we shall suggest some queries and arguments which we think will show such reasoning to be erroneous.

First. Let us ask the man, who is zealously engaged in avenging a wrong, whether he is confident that he has not, in

some way, given provocation for what he is about to avenge. This is a question which every one ought carefully to weigh, and to be able to decide in the negative before the work of retaliation is commenced; for unless this question be correctly answered in the negative, it is evident that this retaliation, which is meditated, cannot be justified on the principle on which its author professes to act. But we shall take it for granted that the question is answered in the negative, and is so answered correctly; and then we shall ask,

Secondly. If the wrong to be avenged was not induced by a previous wrong, is it not more than probable that it was done without any dislike or anger towards the person on whom it was inflicted? This we think must be granted. And then we

must be careful to inquire,

Thirdly. Whether this intended retaliation is at all likely to be inflicted with a disposition as entirely free from ill will or anger as was the wrong which is to be avenged? This question, we presume, must be answered in the negative. If a person be disposed to inflict an injury on another, for the purpose of avenging an injury received, it is very evident that he is prompted so to do by resentment. This resentment is sure to be accompanied with anger. When a man is actuated by an angry spirit to inflict an injury, by way of retaliation, nothing, in such a case, could with less reason be expected, than a careful and exact calculation that the injury to be inflicted, should, by no means, exceed the provocation to be avenged. This will be acceded, the moment we consider the fact, that such a nice calculation must be induced, not by an angry, but by a friendly spirit. If an angry spirit gives place to a friendly one, the latter, becoming the governing principle of action, will never induce to any act which has not the good of its obiect in view.

We must now return to inspect the course pursued by him, who, yielding to the dictates of an angry spirit, endeavors to avenge an injury. As it is impossible for this anger and resentment, either to restrict the avenging injury to the exact measure of the provocation, or even to desire to do so, they will be sure, if successful, to go beyond, far beyond the extent of the injury to be avenged. Having succeeded, he now surveys the ruin his resentment has produced, and not only triumphs in the achievement but justifies himself in the same.

Let us now compare the two: the one who gave, and the one who avenged the provocation. In the first, we find, on due inspection, a moral disorder, discovering the following symptoms; first, a desire to obtain property; secondly, disinclination to industry; thirdly, dishonesty; fourthly, guilt. In the latter we find, what we shall venture to call another moral disorder, which is marked with the following symptoms: first, anger; secondly, a desire of vengeance; thirdly, a destitution of favor; fourthly, a self-approbation.

Having these disorders thus before us, we may ask, Fourthly, which of the two discovers the most dangerous symptoms? or, in other words, which of these two moral disorders places the patient farthest from strict moral rectitude, or in a situation

the most uncomfortable?

That we may aim at a just solution of this query, it seems necessary that we recollect, that as the retaliation was dictated by an angry spirit, it was sure to meditate, and if successful, to inflict a much greater injury than the one avenged. if we allow the quantity of evil, which these disorders respectively produce, to assist in the discussion of our question, it seems that we have already solved it. He who dishonestly and clandestinely injured his fellow being, without provocation, shows himself to be, in a measure, hostile to moral rectitude; but not to such a degree as to justify himself in his wickedness. He suffers guilt in the path of crime, and fearful apprehension of being detected, and visited with appalling vengeance. But the avenger, if he act on the principle of retaliation, and is moved thereto by resentment and an angry spirit, is far more determined to injure the offender, than the offender was to injure him. Now just as far as his purpose to inflict injury on the offender exceeds the offender's intention to injure him, so much farther is he, in this particular, from moral rectitude, than he who gave the provocation. to the query, which of the two is in the most uncomfortable condition, or which suffers the most from their respective disorders, we deem it safe to allow that he who is farthest from moral rectitude, is in the most unhappy condition. Let us now ask,

Fifthly. Which of these disorders is the most malignant and the hardest to cure? These qualities we shall be obliged to assign to that which claims justification, on the ground of provocation; for this self justification acts directly against any

prescription designed as a cure of the disorder. The man who wrongs his neighbor without provocation feels self-condemned, and conscience is all the time exerting its influence to bring the disorder to a crisis, and to produce repentance.

But we must proceed to ask,

Sixthly. Whether what we have ventured to call a moral disorder, is not a commendable virtue, tending to cure the moral evil of injuring our fellow creatures without provocation? That any act may be virtuous, it must owe its existence to a virtuous design. A design, in order to be virtuous, must look at the object to be affected by what is to be done, with a benevolent eye. But we have already seen that the angry spirit which avenges an injury, has no friendly design towards the subject on which retribution is inflicted. This being understood, even if we should allow that retaliation may tend to cure the evil which provokes it, we cannot, on that account, denominate it a virtue. But, generally speaking, we think, that in place of curing the evil of those wrongs which are committed without provocation, retaliation becomes provocation in its turn. For, as has been made to appear, the spirit of retaliation, being an offended, angry spirit, overleaps the extent of the provocation which it avenges, and inflicts a much sorer evil. The man who inflicts this sorer evil on his neighbor who has first injured him, has thereby become an aggressor, not the first, we allow, but evidently the greatest. By this means, in room of curing the offender of a disposition to repeat any of his offences, this retaliation has kindled the fire of resentment in his breast, and rendered him as angry as was the avenger, and gives to him, in turn, the same occasion or provocation for taking vengeance. This retaliating spirit, in room of preventing evil, seems well furnished with both the disposition and the means of extending it. It is a moral disease which rages like a consuming fire, and threatens dire destruction of everything it meets. It is often contagious, communicating itself from one to another, involving many in affliction and ruin.

The very limited view here taken of the law of retaliation, presents the subject in a sufficiently clear light to render it evident that it ought to admonish every one to avoid its angry spirit, and to guard against its gratification, or indulgence. Especially does it become the duty of legislatures, in framing

criminal codes, to use all possible caution to keep the haggard features of unmerciful vengeance from appearing in the laws against crime. Although in mildness and humanity our laws are greatly improved, from what they were in ages past, there seems no room to doubt that even now the sufferings endured, which are occasioned by the execution of penal laws, bear a near proportion to those which are the immediate consequences of their violation, if they do not exceed them. And in many instances, it is very apparent that this excess is enormous. As in cases of physical maladies, it often turns out that the patient is injured more by injudicious prescriptions than by the disorder; so it is, in an improper administration of what is considered legal justice. That wisdom which is pure and gentle, views every transgresssor as a kind parent views his son when affected with bodily disease.

In all such cases, compassionate pity seeks the aid of every means which can be employed to overcome and subdue the malady, and save the child. Could such a spirit and such a wisdom have the sole management of criminals in society, they would soon call into action those dormant affections of the heart, which once awakened and properly directed, would reform the most inveterate, and subdue the most refractory. Men who can, by a steady, mild, and wisely directed discipline, tame the ferocious tiger, and domesticate the wildest animals, ought to blush at those laws which renounce humanity, and yield up forever his own brother to the dominion of

vice.

Our kind Creator sets us out in the right way. He first gives us our children, whom we tenderly love, to govern. In them we find the germs of all those weeds, which, if not seasonably subdued, will grow to the most inveterate vices. To render our government of these children efficient and salutary, he has founded it in the kind affections of our hearts. These affections are ever seeking and employing those kind and gentle means, which, without breaking down the young ambition of the child, give it a favorable direction, and feed its hopes with prospects, which grow on virtue's stem only. In this government, which is the image of that of heaven, faults are made to correct and subdue themselves, while the disobedient are induced to lament their folly, by the grief and pity it wakes up in the parental boson.

Why should the government of a well regulated communi-

ty differ so widely from the family government, as in many respects most of governments do? In the family circle, where parental love bears rule, the delinquent child is treated with kindness, and is so taught, that it dreads the grief and pity of the parent, far more than any severity to which it is exposed. But how is it with the unhappy member of society, who violates the laws of the state? Suppose the young man, owing to a want of suitable moral instruction, and the happy influence of examples calculated to elevate the mind above the vice of theft, wrongfully takes property from its lawful owner; he has no sooner committed the crime than he feels himself an alien from society, and looks on community as being hostile to him. The thousands of eyes given to the police, towards him, gloar with a dreaded vengeance, which tells him to escape detection by all the means in his power! Perhaps he knows of no heart in the wide world which contains a drop of either pity or compassion for him. Or if such a heart be in the world, it may be found in his afflicted mother, who is the lone inhabitant of poverty's miserable retreat. What remains of the history of this unfortunate wretch, may be learned within the dismal walls of a prison; and may serve as a luminous comment on government which exercises far more severity than compassion, and justifies itself by the rigid balance of retaliation.

If in fact there is any wrong in what we have seen pourtrayed, as we feel confident there is, it strongly indicates the necessity of inquiring for the cause of its existence, and for the impure fountain from which such a deadly stream proceeds. We have no hesitation in saying, that all the unmerciful severities which are contained in criminal laws, and also the revengeful spirit by which such severities are inflicted, owe their origin to a corrupt and false theology. If devotion had never been offered to a being, whose justice is destitute of mercy, the spirit of community and the wisdom of legislatures would have looked on crime with compassion, and would have treated it as a disease to be cured; and on the offender, as the patient to be saved, and restored to soundness. But theologians have taught the people, that the divine Being governs the moral world by a law, which can exercise no compassion, can show no mercy to the transgressor. On this theory they have founded their notions of an endless state of infinite sufferings.

in which millions of beings, both angels and men, are to realize all the torments which infinite wisdom can contrive, and

which inexorable justice can inflict.

In a community, whose religion and devotion are founded on such sentiments of infinite cruelty; whose clergy, in all religious and pious instructions, embrace and incorporate the terrors of these doctrines, we must necessarily expect to find, at least, some of the features of such divinity in the laws more or less, as legislatures are directed by clerical influence. If we look back to the fourteenth century, and even to much later times, we shall find the laws, in christian countries, to correspond with these unmerciful doctrines, and to be entirely devoted to the execution of all the relentless cruelties, which the clergy could invent. But after depriving their fellow men of everything valuable on earth, and after tormenting them in the most barbarous manner even unto death, they were confident that the god they worshipped would not only approve of what little torment they had inflicted, but would succeed it, in the invisible world, with those unspeakably greater miseries, embraced in their faith.

In our happy country, and in the present age of general improvement, when liberal and merciful sentiments are prevailing, we rejoice to find the general current of public feeling, strongly setting in favor of lenient laws; and that our legislatures, though tardy in their movements that way, manifest favorable symptoms of such reforms as the gracious sentiments

of a merciful divinity desire to see effected.

Should the time ever arrive, as we devoutly hope it may, when crime shall be treated with no more severity than compassion for the wanderer from moral rectitude will prescribe for the gracious ends of reformation, our laws will correspond with the moral government of that merciful Being, who will not cast off forever; but who, though he cause grief, will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies; who does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of his love. When such times shall come, the cruelties which are now common, in what is called discipline, will be known only in histories of past days. God will be worshipped as the Father of his creatures, whose loving kindness and tender mercies are over all his works, who will have mercy and not sacrifice.

ART. XX.

The Phrase, Day of the Lord, as used in the Old and New Testaments.

This phrase is somewhat marked with the peculiar magnificence of diction, common to the Orientals, but unfamiliar to On this account, the expression naturally gives us, if not on our guard, too strong an impression, the idea of a much higher sense than it originally conveyed; and our readiness thus to exaggerate its meaning, is favored, likewise, by the towering hyperboles which frequently occur in the context. Accordingly, the day of the Lord is supposed by most readers to denote, of course, the consummation of all things; and when they find it sometimes connected with such figures as the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of the stars, and the removing of the earth out of its place, they are confirmed beyond the reach of doubt in such an application. But if we take the only proper method to ascertain its real force, -if we carefully examine the several passages in which it is used, we shall see at once that it actually denoted nothing more than some striking and extensive visitation of divine Providence, and that it was applied indiscriminately to famine, war, or the overthrow of kingdoms, or to any events whatsoever of a similar kind.

A familiar acquaintance with this scriptural usage is very desirable, not only out of respect to the phrase itself, but also on account of its intimate relation to other important forms of expression; such as the day of the Lord's vengeance, the day of the Lord's wrath, the day of wrath, or, of vengeance, the day of judgment, &c. All these manifestly belong to the same class with that which we have selected; and a full understanding of one, will be of advantage to the correct interpretation of the rest.

We think, therefore, that we shall devote no more than a due proportion of our pages to the subject, if we take room to lay before our readers nearly all the passages in which this phrase occurs, and by means of their respective contexts, point out the particular event referred to in each instance. As we go along, it may be well to avail ourselves also of the repeated opportunities presented, of tracing the bold imagery

which the prophets habitually introduce in their predictions, and which so frequently mislead the unwary. Proceeding now to the task proposed, we shall set down the passages in their chronological order, or that in which they were written, paying no regard to the arbitrary and confused arrangement of the several books as they stand in the canon; and although we shall not quote every recurrence of the phrase, yet we shall aim to make such a selection of examples as will be in all respects impartial.

I. 1. The oldest passage in which it is used, is the following in the book of Joel: 'Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand; and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down, for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee; for the rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand: a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness: as the morning spread upon the mountains, a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness: yea, and nothing shall escape them.1'

This prophecy is supposed to have been written about 800 years before Christ. Three things are manifest from the passage itself: 1. That the day of the Lord, here announced, was then nigh at hand; 2. That it was to be a time of famine and drought; and 3. That this destruction was to be brought upon the land by a vast multitude of strange invaders.

If we now examine the context at large, we shall find that these invaders were palmer-worms, canker-worms, caterpillars,2 and especially clouds of locusts,3 that terrible scourge of the East. Their appearance was to be as the appearance of horses; their noise on the tops of the mountains like that of chariots and a flame of fire; they should climb the wall like men of war, run to and fro in the city, and enter in at the windows like a thief.4

This day of the Lord, then, was, plainly speaking, a visitation of famine, drought, locusts and other destroying insects, which fell on Judea, either in the days of Joel, or soon afterwards. Yet the prophet proceeds to represent the scene by the following tremendous imagery: 'The earth shall quake before them; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining; and the Lord shall utter his voice before his army, for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?'5 The army of the Lord, as it is here called, is afterwards explained thus: 'the locust, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.'6

2. Cotemporary with Joel, or rather somewhat later, was the prophet Amos. Addressing the people of Israel, he says, 'Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into a house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not

light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?'8

We are not told whether this day of the Lord was nigh or remote. But what was the scene here alluded to, by that phrase? Evidently, the desolation of the country, and the captivity of the inhabitants; for such is the import of the language which immediately precedes the quotation, and of that which follows it: 'Wailing shall be in all the streets, and they shall say in all the highways, alas, alas! And they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skillful of lamentation to wailing. And in all vineyards shall be wailing; for I will pass through thee, saith the Lord....Therefore

² i, 4, ii, 25. ⁷ Amos v. 1,4. ⁵ ii. 10, 11. ° ii. 25. 3 ditto. 4 ii. 4-9. 8 v. 18-20.

will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.' This prophecy is thought to have been delivered nearly 790 years before Christ. About sixty years from that date, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, invaded Israel, and laid it under tribute; and soon afterwards he took Samaria, the capital, carried the principal inhabitants, the soldiers and the armorers to the banks of the Tigris, and brought colonists into the kingdom of Israel, from Babylon and other eastern countries. This was probably the day of the Lord which Amos predicted in the passage under consideration.

3. Isaiah flourished from about the year 770 or 760, till the year 710 or 700, before Christ. 'Enter into the rock,' says he, in his prophecy 'concerning Judah and Jerusalem,' enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and

he shall be brought low; 2 &c 4

Though it is evident that this day of the Lord was to come on the kingdom of Judah, it would be impossible perhaps to determine with confidence the precise period spoken of. From the next chapter, however, it seems that it was to be when the whole stay of bread and water should be taken from Jerusalem and Judah; when the country should be ruined, and the great and mighty men should fall by the sword. 'For,' says the prophet, 'behold the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread and the whole stay of water, the mighty man, the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.....For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallenThy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.'5 It is not improbable that

¹ Amos v, 16, 17, 27.

² Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth. Sect. xl, p. 123, Andover Ed.

³ Isa. ii, 1. iii, 1, 16.

⁴ ii, 10—12.

⁵ iii, 1, 2, 3, 8, 25, 26.

this is a prediction of the Babylonish captivity, which began about 607 years before Christ: a century or more after the

delivery of this prophecy.

Isaiah mentions also another day of the Lord; one that was to come upon another nation: 'Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt. And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain, as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.'1

This, we learn from the context, was a prophecy of the capture of Babylon by the Medes, and of the eventual desolation of that city; for it is introduced by the title, 'The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see; '2 and it is succeeded by the following literal explanation: 'Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver, and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces, and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there: and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures: and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there,' &c. 3 Accordingly, Babylon was taken by Cyrus, after a very long war, and placed under the dominion of the Medes, in the year 539 before Christ: about two centuries after the date of this prophe-

Such, then, was 'the burden of Babylon,' here foretold under the appellation of the day of the Lord. Now let the reader turn to the passage, and he will see that, notwithstanding no more is intended than the overthrow of a nation, it is described in the most daring figures that heaven and earth could furnish: 'The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall

² Isa. xiii, 6—9. ² xiii, 1. ² xiii. 17—22.

not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.....Therefore I will shake the heavens; and the earth shall remove out of her place at the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up. They shall every man turn to his own people, and every one flee into his own land. Every one that is found, shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword.' &c.¹

4. Not far, probably, from the year 607 before Christ, is the date of the following prophecy of Jeremiah: 'This is the day of the Lord God of hosts; a day of vengeance that he may avenge him of his adversaries. And the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt; in vain shalt thou use ma-

ny medicines, for thou shalt not be cured.'2

From the concluding words of the quotation, it seems that this day of the Lord was to exhaust its vengeance on the Egyptians; and that such was the real meaning, may be seen at once by casting the eye on the title which the prophet gives to this prediction: 'The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah king of Judah.' And it is a fact of historical record, that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the 607th before Christ, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, advanced against Babylon, as far as the Euphrates; and was there defeated by Nebuchadrezzar or Nebuchadnezzar I,; who pursued his victory to the gates of Jerusalem, took the city, and thus established his sovereignty over Judea.4 This was the beginning of the Babylonish captivity.

5. There is some difference of opinion among critics, as to the date of Obadiah's prophecy; but Archbishop Newcome has fixed it, with much probability, at about the 587th year before Christ. If his calculation is correct, we may deter-

¹ Isa. xiii, 10, 13, 14, 15.

² Jer. xlvi, 10, 11.

³ xlvi, 1.

⁴ Josephus against Apion, i, 9.

² Kings xxiv, 1—7.

² Chron. xxxvi, 5—8.

Dan. 1, 3.

mine with certainty the precise reference of the following passage in this prophecy 'concerning Edom', or Idumea: 'The day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen. As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as

though they had not been.'2

The guilt which the prophet alleged against the Edomites, as the occasion of the judgment threatened, was their hatred of the Israelites, and their connivance with the enemies who took Jerusalem: 'For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.' For this, the day of the Lord was near upon them. Accordingly we find, that about the year 586 before Christ, Nebuchadnezzar the Great, the second of that name, began the siege of Tyre; which continuing thirteen years, must have distressed Edom severely. At the end of this period, the Babylonian monarch marched his forces through that country, on his expedition against Egypt.

6. At about the year 570 before Christ, we meet with the following prophecy of Ezekiel: 'Howl ye, wo worth the day! for the day is near, even the day of the Lord is near; a cloudy

day; it shall be the time of the heathen.'4

The next words describe the event alluded to: 'The sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia, and Lybia, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword. Thus saith the Lord, they also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down. From the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord God.....I also will make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations,

¹ Obadiah 1. ² 15, 16. ³ 10, 11. ⁴ Ezek. xxx. 2 3

shall be brought to destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain,' &c. 1 This prophecy was speedily fulfilled; for within four or five years afterwards, Nebuchadrezzar, or Nebuchadnezzar the Great, made himself master of all Egypt, and carried many of the inhabitants captive to the territory beyond the Euphrates. He pushed his success, laid waste nearly the whole of the Mediterranean coast of Africa, to the Straits of Gibraltar, and then crossed over into Spain.2 Such was the day of the Lord here

threatened on Egypt.

7. We descend now to the latest of the Old Testament prophets, and the last in the order of the canon. Malachi is supposed to have flourished about 420 or 430 years before 'Behold, the day cometh,' says he, 'that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.....Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers unto the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. '3

The only specific reference here given to fix the period alluded to, is the assurance that it should follow the coming of Elijah the prophet; so that by ascertaining when this latter event occurred, we shall determine the time immediately preceding the day of the Lord here mentioned. Now, the coming of Elijah, it is well known, took place in the appearance and ministry of John the Baptist; of whom, the angel who announced his birth to his father, declared, in the very words of Malachi, that he should 'go before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, '&c.4 and of whom our Saviour positively asserted, 'this is Elias which was for to come.'5

This 'great and dreadful day of the Lord,' then was some public and extraordinary judgment that was to rage, like a burning tempest, on the proud and wicked, soon after the time of John the Baptist. And we scarcely need remark, that about forty years after his ministry and death, a scene of trib-

¹ xxx, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 20—26. ² Jahn's xlvi. pp. 143, 144. ³ Malachi iv. 1, 5, 6. xi, 14. xvii, 10—13. Mark ix, 11—13. ² Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth, Sect. 4 Luke i, 17.

ulation, such as had not been since the foundation of the world, and such as never should be again, came upon the haughty, rebellious Jews, levelled their city with the dust, exterminated the larger part of the nation, and scattered the remnant like ashes to the four winds of heaven.

Before we take leave of this prophecy, with which we close our quotations from the Old Testament, we would beg the reader to mark the magnificence of the figure with which this day of the Lord is here represented: burning as an oven, and consuming all the proud and wicked, so as to leave them neither root nor branch!

II. In the New Testament, the phrase under consideration occurs, in its simple form, but three times; though the expression, the day of the Lord Jesus, is found in one or two additional passages. These, however, we shall pass without notice;

but take up the others in their order.

1. The first is that well known prophecy of Joel which St Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost, and applied, at least the former part of it, to that occasion: 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath: blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come.'2

It is probable that St Peter intended to apply no more of this prediction to the extraordinary scene exhibited on the day of Pentecost, than that which related to the effusion of the holy spirit and the gift of prophecy; for the latter part of the passage evidently refers to the approaching visitation on the Jews, and to the signs that should precede 'that great and notable day of the Lord.' This address was delivered by St Peter at Jerusalem, thirty-seven years before the destruction of that

city; or A. D. 33.

2. The first Epistle to the Thessalonians is thought to have

¹1 Cor. v, 5. 2 Cor. i, 14. Acts ii, 16, 20.

been written about A. D. 52 or 54, soon after St Paul, in company with Silas, first preached the gospel in their city, and gathered a multitude of converts. These converts, we are told in the book of Acts, were from the devout Greeks: a term which, Dr Clarke asserts, was used to signify proselytes to Judaism, and the descendants of Jewish parents. Addressing them, the apostle says, Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you; for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with childs and they shall not exceed a safety.

man with child; and they shall not escape.'3

To what period did the apostle here allude? The very next words show that he expected this day would overtake the Thessalonians; not indeed as a thief, because they were not in darkness as to its preceding signs, and would watch and be sober: 'But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober.' 4 Since it is evident that he was speaking of some great and general tribulation then near at hand, it is probable that he alluded to the impending destruction of the Jews, which deeply involved that people even in the remote provinces where they had been dispersed. For, in addition to the vast multitude of visitors from all parts of the world, who perished in the siege and capture of the city, those who remained in foreign lands, says Dr Jahn, 'must have felt severely the hard fate of their native country. A people who had always been disliked on account of their supposed unreasonable religion, and who had now lost their native land, their capital and their temple, must have appeared, in the eyes of all the heathen, as a race peculiarly odious to the gods.'5 Accordingly, we find that the popular hatred immediately broke out into action against them in several places, particularly at Antioch, Alexandria and Cyrene. 6

3. The last passage in which we find the phrase, is in St Peter's Second Epistle, so called, written, it is thought, be-

¹ Acts xvii, 4. ² Commentary on the N. Test. Preface to 1 Thess. ³ I Thess. v. 1—3. ⁴ v. 4—6. ⁵ Hebrew Commonwealth, Sect. clvix. p. 495. ⁶ Josephus Jewish War, Book vii, ch. 5, 2. and ch. 10 & 11.

tween A. D. 60 and 66, and five or six years before the destruction of Jerusalem: 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?'1

This, we suppose, is the only passage we have adduced, of which the application will be much questioned. Dr John Owen, H. Witsius, Drs Hammond and Lightfoot, 2 apply it to the approaching destruction of the Jewish state; others, to the remote and final conflagration of the universe. It certainly appears that St Peter (if he was indeed the author of this doubtful Epistle,) supposed the day of the Lord here mentioned, to be so near at hand, that it deeply concerned his brethren to look for and haste unto its coming. And he immediately quotes, as applicable, a prophecy from Isaiah, which is generally believed to refer to the abolition of the Jewish economy and the complete establishment of the Christian: 'Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, (Isa. lv, 17. lxvi, 22.) look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore,' adds he, 'beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.'3 It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to conceive that the writer, whoever he was, regarded these things as very remote, and as hidden in the distant ages of futurity, thousands of years after the death of all those whom he thus exhorted.

The only argument, we apprehend, that will be urged against these suggestions, is founded on the magnificence of the descriptions in the text and context, compared with the common-place, familiar style of the Epistle. The author speaks, it may be said, of the passing away of the heavens with a great noise, of the melting of the elements with fervent

¹ 2 Pet. iii, 10—12.

Novementary Theologumena, Lib. iii, 1, apud Witsius de Seculo Hoc et Futuro, xxv—xxvii, inter Meuschenii Nov. Test. ex Talmud. Illustratum; Dr. Hammond's Paraphrase and Annotations on the N. Test. in loca; and Dr. Lightfoot's Works, Vol. ii. pp. 226, 1074, 1117. Fol. Edit. London, 1684.

heat, of the burning up of the earth, in short, of the creation in flames; and all this, not in a connexion characterized by the excessive hyperbole of oriental poetry, but in the course of a plain and simple epistolary address. Accordingly, it will perhaps be contended, we ought to take the expresions, not as figures, and they too of the very boldest kind,

but rather as literal descriptions.

There is, no doubt, much plausibility in this argument, and possibly some truth. Yet it should be considered, that both the writer, and the believers whom he addressed, must, from reading the prophets, have been already accustomed to the same sort of imagery as the appropriate representations of any day of the Lord whatsoever; and that it was therefore natural enough that he should introduce it amidst the more simple language of his Epistle; that he pointedly alluded, in the course of the passage, to our Saviour's well known prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was to 'come as a thief in the night; '1 and that he likened it, as Christ had done, to the desolation of the flood in the days of Noah.2 Whoever considers these circumstances, will not find it very difficult, perhaps, to account for the boldness of the figures, familiarized as they had been by prophetic usage, and associated, by explicit reference, with the like metaphors in Christ's predictions. Be this as it may, however, we must do manifest violence to the author's earnest exhortation, unless we admit that he thought the day would come while his brethren vet lived, so that it behoved them to look for it with care, and be diligent that it should find them 'in peace, without spot and blameless.'

We have now finished the survey of the subject proposed. From the various examples adduced, which are nearly all that are to be found in the Bible, the reader has seen that the day of the Lord was a phrase used to denote any time of great and general calamity; and that such scenes were habitually described by metaphors the most dazzling and terrific that the imagination could conceive. A little care in tracing the context, will preserve us from any great mistakes in their

¹ See Matt. xxiv. 42-44. Compare 2 Pet. iii. 5-7 with Matt. xxiv, 37-39.

interpretation; but to heedless readers, or to those who never read for themselves, it is not strange that they should convey the most extravagant and incorrect ideas.

H. B. 2d.

ART. XXI.

The Nature and Design of Punishment.

'Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For, they verily for a few days chastened us, after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.' Here. xii. 9, 10.

We are never in greater danger of adopting erroneous ideas, than when we lose sight of the paternal character of God. He is our Father; and justly commands us to regard him as such. We are required to acknowledge him as the Creator of all things; to pray to him as 'our Father which art in heaven,' and to carry the idea into all reflections upon our duty, prospects, and destiny, that 'he hath created of one blood all the nations of men, for to dwell upon all the face of the earth.'

It is especially necessary that we should bear the fact that he is 'the Father of the spirits of all flesh' upon our minds, whenever we attempt to reason upon the nature and extent of the punishment which the Scriptures assure us will be inflicted upon the disobedient and ungodly. For, unless we do so, we shall be liable to fall into errors and extravagances, alike dishonorary to the God we worship, and destructive to our own

lappiness.

In the passage before us, this endearing characteristic of the great 'I am,' is fully recognized and acknowledged—and that, too, in direct reference to the subject of punishment. And the idea is carried, that in reasoning upon matters of this sort, we may lawfully—and of course safely—bring to our aid such illustrations as can be drawn from the conduct of our earthly parents, in their corrections of our faults.

I am aware of the fact that some have objected to this method of reasoning, from the supposition that family government

is often imperfect; but it may be here remarked, once for all, that we shall reason safely enough, in this way, if we are careful always to draw inferences favorable to the justice and benevolence of God, wherever the parallel between his character and that of the good earthly parent stops. In other words, when we reach that point in the argument, where we find ourselves compelled to pause, and confess, that 'his ways are not like our ways, nor his thoughts like our thoughts'—if, I say, we are then careful to admit that the disparity consists in his being infinitely more wise, just, and merciful than the best of his creatures, we shall be in no danger of coming to wrong conclusions.

Now, many have labored under serious disadvantages, in their reflections upon the nature and design of punishment, in consequence of having attached a wrong idea to the word itself. Whenever they read anything about punishment, the notion is immediately conveyed to their minds, that it is something dreadful beyond description—something which should be deprecated, as the worst calamity that can befal us. This

comes of having lost sight of the design or object of it.

If we reflect upon it abstractly, it must be confessed that there is nothing desirable in it. For, as we are told in the context of the passage which stands at the head of this article, 'no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous;' it is, from the very nature of it, if we lose sight of the good it is designed to produce, an object of dislike. But the moment we come to understand the end, to which wisdom and benevolence adapt this punishment—or, in other words, when we are brought to see that the thing, which, abstractly, is so grievous, is the mean, and that there is a desirable end, or result, beyond it, much of its terror is at once taken away; and we are brought to acquiesce in it—not for the sake of the punishment itself, but for the sake of the benefit that will result from the infliction of it.

A better name for the subject of these remarks, is that which is given to it in the text—viz. correction. The word, in itself considered, is no better than the other; but the idea which we have associated with it, comes nearer to what the Scriptures inform us is the punishment which the righteous judge inflicts upon his disobedient children. And the common definition of this term will help us to understand this much

controverted subject.

It may be observed, in the first place, that all punishment, in order to be just, must be disciplinary, or corrective.

In laying down this proposition we make no exception,—we say that *all* punishment, in order to be just, must be of this description. Anything that falls short of this, is at best but a mere mockery of punishment; anything that goes a step beyond it, is cruelty. Let us see how this will bear investigation.

'We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence.' Did we give them reverence on account of supposing that they chastised us merely for the sake of seeing us in pain? or merely for the sake of gratifying a malignant disposition and temper? or without any particular design?—No—if we reverenced them at all, it was not for any of these reasons. Why did we reverence them? Simply for this reason—we were made sensible of the fact that their design was to bring us to a sense of duty, and to the enjoyment of happiness.

of happiness.

A well regulated family is the best model for a community of social beings. A nation, or a state, ought to be a family on a large scale. The laws of such a community, as all will admit, ought to be such as are best calculated to promote the welfare, prosperity, and happiness of the whole; and, as the whole is made up of parts, the laws ought to be adapted to the end of promoting the welfare and interests of each individual. And if this is true of the law, it seems to follow that its penalty should be of the same character. Indeed, all penalties should be calculated to reclaim.

Those who believe and advocate the doctrine of endless punishment, are in the habit of referring to the penalties inflicted by human tribunals for capital offences, to prove that it will be just in God to punish the wicked eternally; but this is taking for granted what ought first to be substantiated by the most conclusive proof. They ought, in the first place, to show, by something less variable than human laws, and the customs of civilized nations, that capital punishments are just. And even then—admitting that such punishments are just, it would remain to be seen whether it is not true, that the only ground on which they can be justified, is the incompetency of finite wisdom to devise a plan which shall render punishment effectual.

The fact is, parents have never been invested with the

right of inflicting capital punishment upon their own children. And if human governments ought to be of a paternal character, we can conceive of no principle that will invest them with authority which does not appertain to the parent. It is a settled maxim that an individual cannot confer upon another a right, or prerogative, which he does not himself possess. Neither does he acquire any new prerogative by associating with others. If, then, human governments ought to be truly parental; and if, in order to be so, they ought not to transcend the rules which are given us for the direction of parental authority; and if parents have not the right to inflict any other punishment than that which is truly corrective, where shall we find anything to justify the state or the nation in inflicting either vindictive or capital punishments?

I am not ignorant of the fact that a common method of justifying those punishments which enlightened reason considers barbarous, is, to appeal to the Old Testament, and by so doing, make it out that God has authorized them. As well might we appeal to the Old Testament to justify circumcision, polygamy, or murder in the first degree. A sufficient reply to all arguments raised on that ground is simply this: the Old Testament is to be received as authority no farther than it corresponds with the genius and spirit of the New; and of this correspondency we are to judge by an exercise of our own reason. There are as many things described in the Old Testament, to be carefully avoided, as there are to be imitated.

It is supposed, by some, that the apostle, in asking, 'shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?' alluded to the stubborn and rebellious son—Deut. xxi, 18—21. The barbarous law is thus expressed: 'If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them; then shall his father and mother lay hold on him, and bring him to the elders of the city; and they shall say, This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice;—and all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die.'

Now, all we have to do with this passage, is, to observe, that the right to inflict death upon the rebellious child, was not in the hands of the parents; and then, this law may be compared with the spirit of the gospel. And if this is done, we shall have no difficulty in detecting its injustice and cruelty.

But it is enough for my present purpose, to show, that, whatever may be the effect, parental chastisements ought to be designed to correct the disobedient child. And, that this should be their object, is sufficiently obvious from the consideration, that the parent has no authority to inflict any other punishment, than that which is designed to reclaim; and from the fact, that it would be an act of cruelty to inflict any other, even if he had legal authority to do it.

If this be the true state of the case as regards human authority, we shall have no difficulty in coming to a safe conclusion as to the nature, design, and effect of the punishment which our heavenly Father will inflict upon the disobedient, if we will but keep in view another fact, which will now be submit-

ted—viz:

That punishment, in order to have it corrective, or disciplinary, must not only be designed to reform, but must actually be so apportioned, and so adapted to the condition of the guil-

ty, as that it shall effectually reclaim them.

To illustrate this proposition, it may be here observed, that any correction of those who are providentially placed under our care, should be, as far as practicable, adapted to that end, and that alone. And that this may be done, great care should be taken that the correction be of the right kind; that there is

enough of it; and not any more than enough.

Earthly parents who correct—or to use a more proper word, chastise their children a little, and then let them go, without having brought them to a sense of duty, are just as cruel as they would be were they unreasonably severe; since that little would be productive of no good consequences. If they chastise them more than enough—that is, if they continue the punishment after the child has relented, then they are also cruel; and if they do not inflict the right kind of chastisement, then are they chargeable with a want of wisdom.

And further—It should be understood that what comes under the denomination of chastisement, is designed only to reclaim. Its only proper office is to reclaim the wicked—to bring them back to a sense of the favors which have been bestowed upon them. After they have been thus brought back, something more must be done, to make them practically virtuous. It is one thing to hate and avoid vice; it is another to love and practise virtue. And hence, should it be found that God, in his infinite wisdom, will punish sinners as much

as they deserve, it need not surprize us to be told, that grace will still be indispensable to our salvation; for that alone can so enlist our affections on the side of holiness, as to render us fit for the kingdom of heaven. And should it turn out at last that he chastises us for our profit—for the sole purpose of making us partakers of his holiness, still we may bear it upon our minds, that punishment alone can never prepare us for heaven—that there is still a necessity that grace should reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

If, now, we may be allowed to consider the punishment which God inflicts, or has threatened, as being truly parental, it will be distinguished from what it has been supposed to be, by the following characteristics, viz:

1. It will be designed to reclaim offenders. We may rest assured that no other object can ever induce the Father of our spirits to chastise us. He will always punish with an intention of making the punished partakers of his holiness; he will al-

ways punish them for their profit.

This, as will be perceived, corresponds exactly with the proper exercise of paternal authority; and also with the views generally entertained of the object by all just human governments. And this will serve to do away those unfavorable impressions which some have received, relative to the supposed vindictiveness of divine punishment. It appears, when we take this view of the subject, like the offspring of pure parental love; and though the rod may sometimes fall heavily upon the sinner, a sense of the goodness of Him who holds it, and of the kindness of His intentions, will render his greatest suffering supportable.

2. Another characteristic of the only punishment that God has ever threatened, or ever can justly inflict upon his disobedient children, is, that it will, in his own due time, be efficacious—not as some may imagine that we affirm—that it will complete the work of our salvation, for that, as before observed, is the work of grace—but it will have the desired effect, in weaning the sinful soul from its love of sin, by making it sensible

of the unprofitableness of its degrading pursuits.

This is evident from the consideration that God is infinitely wise and powerful. Whatever he intends to do, he knows how to do, and is able to do. Hence, if we allow that his object in punishing us, is to reclaim, we are constrained to follow it

out, and admit that he will so adapt his corrections to the desired end, as to secure the object which he has in view.

And this brings us to the conclusion, that all divine correction must necessarily have an end; since it would be manifestly impossible to reconcile the idea of endless punishment, with that of correction for the benefit of the one punished. In fact, there can be no such thing as endless correction. And the only argument that we can conceive of in favor of such a doctrine, must be predicated on the supposition that God cannot render chastisement effectual. For to say that he will not, is to rob him of his glory at once, and make him appear infinitely cruel—worse by far than any earthly parent in his creation.

Let us be careful that our conclusions are in accordance with the spirit of the text, 'We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us'—they did not punish us to gratify a malignant disposition; nor to promote their own glory, for such glory would have been disgrace—they 'corrected us, and we gave them reverence'—we reverenced them because they corrected us from pure and good motives. Then comes the important question—'s shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?' Why? Because our fathers verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit—how so? That we might be partakers of his holiness—that is, that we may be brought to feel his benevolence, and thus be saved from sin with an everlasting salvation.

This view of the subject enables us to discover the hand of mercy in all temporary afflictions. If we regard them as evils, we are constrained to confess that they are but for a moment; —but a far more rational conviction is, that they are so many

blessings in disguise.

Have we done wrong? The love, as well as the justice of God, stands pledged to correct us—to correct us, we say; not to punish us eternally. Let not the sinner pray, therefore, for deliverance from correction—he needs it—he cannot do without it—God would not deal mercifully with him, were he to let him go on in sin, without inflicting the penalty of his law, on those actions which he has wisely and benevolently prohibited. His goodness and justice are so united that neither can be exercised without the other.

In bringing this article to a close, it may be observed,

that we cannot sufficiently deplore the prevalence of that doctrine which inclines the soul to gloomy foreboding, and gives occasion to desire to escape from the wrath of God, or what has been denominated by some, the *just* punishment of our sins. How much better—how much happier would mankind be, if they could constantly realize, that our all is safe in the hands of God; and that he will never correct us any more than will be for our advantage.

And how much more salutary would be the influence of a sentiment, that teaches us that it is neither possible, nor desirable, to escape the just correction of our faults, than of that which encourages us to hope for some mysterious deliverance from the penalty of God's law. May all understand that the only way to escape punishment, is to avoid deserving it.

L. S. E.

ART. XXII.

Explanation of Luke xii, 4, 5.

'And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear : fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.'

There are several reasons which seem not only to justify an attempt to explain this passage of Scripture, but also to call seriously for the same. The use which has long been made of this passage, by divines, to substantiate the doctrine of misery in the future state, and the fearful horrors with which they have tormented their unhappy adherents, seem to call for an effort to disarm such an unholy cause, of a weapon to which it has no right, but which it has long used with truly lamentable effect. To this we may add some pressing requests, for an exposition of the passage, to be presented to the public. It is true that there have already been published sufficient comments on this scripture to satisfy the candid that it contains no authority in support of the terrible sentiment, in vindication of which it has been generally used. But still the unwarrantable practice

is continued, and calls for a full and clear explanation are also continued.

In the first place, it may be beneficial to consider the sentiment in support of which this passage has been used, and the application of the passage to it. 1st. It is believed that the word hell in the text, means a place of unspeakable torment in the invisible world. 2dly. That being cast into hell, means, being cast into this state of torment. 3dly. That as men are not able to injure us after they have taken our lives, we need not fear them. 4thly. But as God is able, after he has killed us, to cast us into this place of torment, we should fear him.

It may not be necessary to be farther particular in stating the common doctrine, to which our text is applied, because it is generally well understood. But we think it somewhat important that such objections to the foregoing use of the text, as have arisen in our meditations on the subject, should be considered.

1st, We object to this use of the text, because we have no information, in any other part or parts of holy writ, that our Creator has established such a place of torment, in the invisible world; and we are very confident that such information is not given in our toy.

given in our text.

2dly, We object to this use because it evidently dishonors that being whom we ought both to love and venerate. If a being who contrives a state of unmerciful sufferings for his own creatures, deserves our love and our homage, we surely cannot imagine one so evil as not to have equal claims to the same.

3dly, It is very evident that the divine Master was endeavoring, in the discourse in which our text is found, not only to put his disciples on their guard against two powers, which were able to injure them, the one more, however, than the other; but also to direct them where their safety lay, and where, or in whom, to place their confidence. See Matt. x, where the parallel passage is found; verses 16—18: 'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, and for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.' Verses 22, 23: 'And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But when they

persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.' Verses 28-31: 'And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing; and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.' Here take particular notice: 1st, Jesus calls the enemies of the gospel wolves, and his disciples he calls sheep, which he was sending forth among these wolves; or in other words, he represents his enemies and his disciples by such figures. 2dly, Observe that Jesus informed his disciples what these wolves would do to them; and also let it be remembered that he told them to beware of men on account of what they would do to them. 3dly, Let it be duly noticed that immediately after the disciples are told whom not to fear, and whom they should fear, Jesus says, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.' Hereit is guite evident that the divine Master meant to teach his disciples, that as their heavenly Father condescended to take care of even one sparrow, he would certainly take care of them who were of so much more value than many sparrows, that he had even numbered the hairs of their head. But the use of the text under consideration, to which we object, supposes that Jesus represented to his disciples, that their heavenly Father, in whom he would have them put such entire confidence as to fear nothing, was more to be feared than all the wolves among whom he sent his defenceless sheep! We cannot believe that the divine Master was so palpably inconsistent in his instructions, as to hold up as an object of the greatest fear, that Father in heaven, in whom he directed his disciples so to trust as not to fear.

4thly. We object to the common use of our text, because the passage is found in the Saviour's particular directions, given to his disciples. And there are many things said in these directions which are by no means applicable to men in general. But the common use of the text applies it to all men, in all conditions, and in all ages. And moreover, Jesus told these

disciples, in the chapter where our text is recorded, calling them a little flock, not to fear, for it was their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom: see verse 32. To this little flock, we cannot believe that their divine Shepherd meant to hold up their heavenly Father, as more to be feared than all their enemies.

5thly, We object to this common use of our text, because there is no mention made of our Creator, nor any word used in the text or its connexion, that presents him as that power that was to be feared, because he could cast into hell. To us it seems unaccountable that learned divines, who, no doubt, have been honest in their studies of the Scriptures, have never been startled at the objections which we have here stated; and yet there are many more which might be presented. But we desire not to be too tedious.

In the second place, we shall attempt an explanation of the passage under consideration, according to the present convictions of our understanding. But we would candidly state, before we proceed, that what we are about to offer, is not, in all its parts, so perfectly clear to our own minds, as we could wish; and therefore a hope is entertained, that some one of more discernment, and of more successful research, will favor

us by reflecting more light on this subject.

We shall begin by suggesting that Jesus, in this discourse, spoke to his disciples concerning the enemies of whom he would have them beware; and distinguished between those who only had power, that is, legal authority to scourge them in their synagogues, and in various ways to treat them cruelly, and others, whose power, or legal authority, extended, not only to the taking of their lives, but to denying them the rites of burial; and who would destroy their lives and their bodies in γέεννα, which is the name of the place which the translators call hell. To this suggestion, two objections will arise in the mind of the reader: First, It will be said that Jesus did not point out two objects of fear, but one only: for he said, fear not them that kill the body, &c. but fear him which, after he hath killed, &c. To answer this objection, we must be able to show, that in Scripture language, it often occurs, that when a preference is to be given to one of two things, the less receives an entire negative, in order to heighten the other. For our satisfaction on this subject, we refer to Psalm li. 16, 17:

'For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise.' Surely none, acquainted with the Scriptures, will suppose that David did not believe that God required sacrifices under the law dispensation. But all good men, in all ages, have understood that in God's sight a humble and a contrite heart was a more acceptable sacrifice than were such as were offered on the altar. To strengthen this view, see 1 Sam, xv, 22, 'And Samuel said, hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams.' What we are in search of, is fully comprised in the following: Hosea vi, 6, 'For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.' Here an entire negative is followed by comparison. If it were proper to say that God required the knowledge of himself more than burnt-offerings, it allows that he required burnt-offerings, which is what the prophet asserts, in the first member of the verse, that God did not desire. Jeremiah, in chap. vii, 22, 23, presents us with a testimony direct and full to our subject: 'For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' With this, compare the institutions and ordinances of the levitical priesthood as recorded in Exodus and Leviticus; and it is seen at once, that the meaning of Jeremiah is, that God did not command the sacrifices of that ancient priesthood but in a sense subordinate to the moral precepts of the law. Jesus himself, though he preferred a good moral act to any gift that might be offered on the altar, required the latter also: Mat. v, 23, 24, 'Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' But if no other proof of what we are endeavoring to establish were at hand, the words of Jesus which follow would be sufficient: John xii, 44, 'Jesus cried, and said, he that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.' In

words, here is a contradiction; but not in sense. What Jesus meant is clear: He that believes on him believes that the Father is greater than he; and therefore gives the preference

to him who sent him.

Having given, what we think is a fair and candid reply to this first objection, we shall now attend to the second, which rests on the word kill. It will, undoubtedly by some be objected, that as Jesus said, fear not them that kill the body, &c. he assigned to those whom he told his disciples not to fear, the power to take their lives. To meet this objection, we confess we have not so ample means as we could wish, nor so much as we might probably obtain by a little more exertion than we have time to employ at present. But what little we have being measurably satisfactory to us, we give it to the reader, hopeing that further light on the subject will from some quarter arise. In the first place, we think that the religious enemies of the disciples, who were of the Jews, being Roman subjects, had not the prerogative to take their lives; but that they had the privilege of their ecclesiastical discipline, which enabled them to cast out of the synagogue, to scourge with whips, and to inflict various and cruel tortures; but not to take life. We think this fact is well substantiated by the plea which the Jews made before Pilate, as recorded John xviii, 31, 'Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews, therefore, said unto him, it is not lawful for us to put any man to death.'

In the second place, we are well persuaded that the word αποκτείνω, which in the text is rendered kill, is not unfrequently used to express cruel torturing, where life is not taken. Parkhurst says that αποκτείνω generally implies cruelty and barbarity.' This we esteem good authority for supposing that although this word is often used to imply the taking of life, it may be understood in a more limited sense in this pas-

sage.

In the third place, we think it is very evident that Jesus had the fact in his mind, when he spoke to his disciples on this subject, that their Jewish enemies had not the power to take their lives. This appears by what he says, as recorded in Mat. x, to which we have already referred. See verses 17, 18: Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testi-

mony against them and the Gentiles.' If their Jewish enemies, who could bring the disciples before their councils, and could scourge them in their synagogues, had authority to take their lives, they would have had no occasion to bring them before Roman governors and kings; but would have been glad to ac-

complish the whole work themselves.

Fourthly, after the divine instructer had presented his disciples with these two authorities, which would be employed against them, it was natural for him to warn them to be more on their guard against falling into the hands of the Roman authorities, than into the hands of those whose power was less extensive. And, therefore, he warned them to fear the greater power more than the less. But it is evident, from the whole connexion, that he would guard them against both, by their being wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

In the passage, as recorded by Matthew, this comparison, for which we contend, is plainly expressed by the word rather $(\mu\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\delta\omega)$ 'But rather fear him,' &c. See chap. vi, 30, 'Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is east into the oven, shall he not much more $(\mu\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega)$ clothe you,' O ye of little faith' vii, 11. 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more $(\mu\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega)$ shall your Father which is

in heaven give good things to them that ask him?'

And fifthly, it appears evident that, according to the text in Matthew, which answers to the one in Luke, which we are considering, life could not be taken by the lesser power: 'And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,' &c. The word here rendered soul is ψυχή, which means the natural life of man. See John xiii, 37, 38, 'Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life (Juxi) for thy sake. Jesus answered him, wilt thou lay down thy life (ψυχή) for my sake?' It is quite unnecessary to multiply quotations on this subject. The fact is well known to all who have examined this word, that it means the natural life; and there was no more propriety in rendering this word soul in Mat, x, 28 than there was for so rendering it in John xiii, 37, 38; And then the passage would have made Peter to say, I will lay down my soul for thy sake,' and Jesus to ask him, wilt thou lay down thy soul for my sake? As there is some reason to believe that there was something like a wrong influence operating in the minds of the translators of our Scriptures, we must beg indulgence while we quote several passages more. And this we do, that the common error concerning this subject, and which has been occasioned by the translatoin, may be corrected. Mat. xvi, 25, 26, 'For whosoever shall save his life (ψυχή) shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life (ψυχή) for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (ψυχή) or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Juxn) 'If by the word soul, the translators meant what divines now mean by it, that is, an immortal part of man, what could induce them to use this word in verse 26, in place of the word life, which they used in the verse preceding? This unwarranted variation of rendering the same word in these two verses, has had a most pernicious effect. And professed divines, either through ignorance or hypocrisy, have imposed the notion on common people, that Jesus, in the above passage, spoke of the eternal damnation of man's immortal soul! That the reader may see the gross absurdity of allowing the word rendered life and soul, to mean an immortal soul in man, we will put down the first verse of the last quoted passage agreeably to such a supposition. Then verse 25 would read thus: 'For whosoever will save his immortal soul shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his immortal soul for my sake shall find it!' See also Mat. xx, 28, 'Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life (ψυχή) a ransom for many.' No one supposes that Jesus here meant to say, that he came to give his immortal soul a ransom for many. Luke xiv, 26, 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life (ψυχή) also, he cannot be my disciple.' We hardly believe that any will contend that Jesus meant that a man must hate his immortal soul, to fit him to be his disciple. Acts xx, 24, 'But none of these things move me; neither count I my life (ψυχή) dear unto me,' &c. Surely, Paul did not mean to say that he did not count his immortal soul dear unto him.

Notwithstanding we expressed a want of entire satisfaction respecting the last objection to which we have replied, we now say that this want has been nearly, if not entirely removed, by comparing the different passages which relate to the subject. And we feel a good degree of confidence that the mind of the

candid reader will feel the force of what has been offered, and see the propriety of paraphrasing our text as follows: 'And I say unto you, my friends, be not so much afraid of them who have power only to scourge you in their synagogues, and to administer cruel tortures to your bodies, but have no authority to take your lives, as of that more extensive authority to which your brethren the Jews will deliver you, by bringing you before governors and kings; for this power can, after inflicting cruelties on your bodies, doom your lives and bodies to be destroyed in yésvva.

It now remains only to give the true meaning of the word γέσυνα, which in our text is rendered hell. Parkhurst, in his Greek and English Lexicon, informs us that yésvva is the corruption of two Hebrew words, one signifying a valley, and the other signifying Hinnom, the name of a person once the possessor of it. He says, 'This valley of Hinnom lay near Jerusalem, and had been the place of those abominable sacrifices, in which the idolatrous Jews burned their children alive to Molech, Baal, or the Sun. A particular place in this valley was called Tophet, and the valley itself, the valley of Tophet, from the fire stove in which they burned their children to Molech.' He further says, 'A gehenna of (fire, Matt. v, 22.) does, as I apprehend, in its outward and primary sense, relate to that dreadful doom of being burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom.' The passage in Matt. v, 22, just referred to, reads as follows: 'But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.' That the learned Parkhurst, who was a believer in future, endless misery, was in the right on this subject, there can be no doubt. But more authority might be quoted, if it were necessary, to show that the word rendered hell, in our text, means nothing but that place of execution, where malefactors were cast alive, and consumed in fire.

To conclude: If there be any important objection to the text under consideration, now offered, we acknowledge our entire ignorance of it. And if any friend to truth, will point out such objection, the favor will be duly appreciated, and can-

didly considered.

ART. XXIII.

Divine Government.

Whether our Creator governs and directs all our thoughts and actions, or whether he has constituted us with a mental, self determining power, are questions concerning which the wisest and best of men, in all ages, have entertained different opinions. Judging, by all we have been able to learn, concerning this still unsettled controversy, we are led to believe that the conflicting sentiments which have been entertained, and which have been contended for, on both sides of the general subject, owe their origin, not so much to the philosophy of either theory, as to the consequences which they are supposed to afford.

He who denies the doctrine of absolute necessity, and contends that men have a self determining power, offers no other reason or argument for his opinion, than that if it be not so, men are not blame worthy for the wrongs they commit, nor justly punishable for them. Here his argument ends. On the other hand, he who denies that man has a self determining power, and contends that we are at all times governed by the Creator, offers in support of his opinion, the divine fore-knowledge of all events, which knowledge, could not exist, if such events were uncertain. Such reasoning casts little or no light on the subject of controversy, because in room of leading the understanding along the path in which perception, will, and volition travel, it diverts the mind from the philosphy of causes and effects, and confuses it with undigested consequences.

The following extract from T. SOUTHWOOD SMITH'S Illustrations of the Divine Government, we think will be read with no small interest, on account of the light it seems to shed on the before mentioned controversy.

H. B.

When the Deity is represented as appointing and controlling every event, it may seem difficult to conceive how this can be reconciled with the agency and accountability of man. A little consideration, however, will show that these truths are not incompatible with each other.

'Though the Sovereign Arbiter of events regulates and determines everything, yet he carries on the administration of the world by the instrumentality of other beings. Seldom does he act directly, seldom is he the immediate cause of anything. He has left the development of his vast plan to the operation of what are termed secondary causes; but these can act only

so far and in such a manner as he has appointed.

'The material world is governed by certain general laws, which are never interrupted except on occasions of supreme importance, foreseen and provided for from the beginning. These laws, though thus steady and invariable in their operation, bring about in every instant of time, precisely that condition only of the material world which he appoints, and which is necessary to carry on his purposes with regard to his animal and moral creation.

'The animal and moral world he governs by laws equally fixed and invariable; but being of a nature different from that of the material world, they require to be governed by different laws. By different laws, therefore, they are governed: by laws admirably and exactly suited to its nature, each is guided

to its destined end.

'The material world being without sensation and thought, is governed by a particular set of laws. The animal world possessing sensation and thought, is governed by another set. By sensation and thought, an animal is induced to act. Every animal possesses a fixed and determinate constitution, according to which, sensation and thought are excited in it in a particular determinate manner. The great agent in inducing sensation and thought in the animal, is the material world. A certain state of the material world will inevitably produce a certain sensation in an animal, possessing a particular constitution: that sensation will produce a particular volition, and that volition will lead, certainly, to a particular action. It only requires, therefore, an exact knowledge of the constitution of the animal world to render its state at all times precisely what may be required: for he who perfectly understands the constitution of the material and the animal worlds, and has a sovereign control over both, has only to adapt the state of the one to that of the other, to make both at any and at all periods, exactly what he wishes. While every animal goes on regularly to exercise its different functions, he may at all times maintain the whole animal world in the condition he pleases: for he may so modify the operation of the material world upon it, as inevitably to bring it into the state he wishes. Thus a sovereign control may be exercised over the material and animal worlds, while both invariably act according to the settled principles of their nature.

'If we ascend in the scale of creation, we shall find that the principle of the Divine administration is exactly the same.

Man is endowed not only with the faculties of sensation and thought, but with the power of distinguishing between the rectitude and immorality of conduct. He is capable of understanding his obligations and the grounds of them. Certain actions appear to him to be good: others he regards as evil. The performance of the one is attended with a consciousness that he has acted right, and excites the sensation of happiness; the performance of the other is attended with an inward conviction that he has acted wrong, and produces misery.

'All this takes place in a fixed and invariable manner according to certain laws which are termed principles of his nature, and the faculty on which this discrimination and feeling de-

pends, is termed, his moral nature.

'Now it is obvious, that to a certain extent, a being thus endowed, may be governed exactly in the same manner as a creature who possesses only an animal nature. In him, as well as in the mere animal, sensations will be excited by the external circumstances in which he is placed. In him too, a particular sensation will excite a particular volition; but the exercise of this volition will be attended with a result which is never found in the animal: with a consciousness that he has acted well or ill: with a feeling of approbation or of disapprobation: with a sensation of happiness or misery, arising purely from the action itself. This train of sensation becomes itself a new source of action; but it arises according to certain fixed laws, and operates as steadily as any other principle of his nature, or as any law of the material world. He, therefore, who perfectly understands this nature, who knows how every circumstance will affect this moral agent, and who has a sovereign control over events, can govern him with the same steadiness with which he regulates the animal or the material world: can make him at all times feel, and think, and act, as may be necessary to carry on the great designs of his administration. without violating any principle of his nature. By adapting the particular situation in which he is placed to the particular state of his mind, he can excite whatever volition, and secure whatever action he pleases. What is maintained, then, is, that with respect to every individual in the world, there is this exact adaption of circumstances to his temper, his habits, his wants, so that while he is left to the full and free exercise of every faculty he possesses, he can feel and act only as the Sovereign of the universe appoints; because the circumstances which excite his sensations and volitions, are determined by him. It is not just to suppose that the Deity exercises any such control over his creatures, as to force them to act contrary to their will, or to violate any principle of their nature: they

always act, and must act, according to their will, and in conformity to their nature; but, at the same time, he secures his own purpose, by placing them in circumstances which so operate upon their nature, as certainly to induce the conduct he requires.*

of the mind. The term volition, expresses the state of the mind, which is immediately previous to the actions which are called voluntary; but that state is not induced by the mind itself, but by objects operating upon it. The circumstances in which a percipient being is placed, excite sensations, and sensations ideas. Sensations and ideas induce that peculiar condition of the mind which is termed pleasurable, or its opposite which is termed painful: the feeling of pleasure excites desire; that of pain aversion: will is the result of this state of the mind. Prove to the mind that an object is desirable, that is, that it will induce pleasure, and you immediately excite in it the volition to possess it: prove to it that an object will occasion pain, and you excite the volition to avoid it. Volition then, it is

[&]quot;It has been argued by almost all who have hitherto written on the origin of Evil, that its existence could not have been prevented, unless an absolute restraint had been placed upon the will. This is not true: for there might have been given to mankind a knowledge of their welfare so clear and strong, as effectually to have secured their choice of it. In other words, they might have been brought under the influence of motives so powerfully determining them to the choice of good, that it would not have been possible for them, their circumstances remaining the same, to have chosen evil. This has been distinctly admitted by a late writer, who, though he has labored to reconcile, and sometimes very successfully, the evil which actually exists,, with the wisdom and goodness of the Deity, yet has carefully avoided opposing or even alluding to those theological opinions which involve this subject in great and insurmountable difficulty. 'It is a position wholly untenable that according to our view of the subject, the degree of moral evil must necessarily have been as great as it is, unless an absolute restraint had been laid upon the will of man. Without entering into metaphysical discussions, it may be safely assumed, that the will is determined by the greater apparent good, and that when it makes a bad election, in defiance of reason and judgment, the dismission of some present uneasines, or the possession of some present gratification, is the greatest apparent good for the time being. Had, then, their real interest, upon a full view of their present and future condition, been placed before all mankind with a clear distinctness which we can certainly conceive, because we have examples of it on record; free-will, though exposed to less chance of error, would not have been annihilated; and yet it would have been as morally impossible for man to choose evil in opposition to good, as we imagine it to be for the glorified inheritors of a future state; as it proved to be for Jesus Christ, during his adoption of human natu

manifest, depends on the object, whatever it be, which the mind contemplates as desirable or otherwise. Take away the object, there is no volition; satisfy it that the object can affect it neither with pleasure nor pain, there is no volition. So that volition does not spring up in the mind of its own accord, and without cause, but is entirely dependent upon objects perceived to be, or supposed to be, desirable. In a word, and to repeat what has already been said, sensations and ideas are attended with the feelings of pleasure or of pain: these induce desire or aversion, and these volition, with as much certainty as the law of gravitation produces the phenomena which are dependent

upon it.*

'Volition being thus dependent on the circumstances in which an individual is placed, any given volition may be excited in him by a certain modification of his circumstances. We find that the tempers of different men are infinitely various; the Deity has made a corresponding variety in the situations in which he has placed them. To every individual he has assigned his allotted work: to every intelligent and moral agent he has given a certain part of his administration to carry on, and in order to qualify him for it, he has adjusted to the particular constitution of his nature, every circumstance of his being, from the first instant of his existence to that which terminates his earthly career. If what is termed his natural disposition be such as would seem to render him incapable of performing it, the situation in which he is placed is adapted to it, and is such as to excite, to repress or to modify it, till it becomes exactly what is necessary to fit him for his work; so that every individual is strictly an instrument raised up and qualified by God to carry on the wise and benevolent purposes of his govern-

'Suppose it is his will to lead men to the discovery of the most interesting truths respecting the phenomena of nature, and the laws by which the universe is governed; he endows an individual with a clear and capacious mind; he places him in circumstances favorable to the development of his intellectual faculties; he leads him to observe, to reflect, to investigate; he forms him to those habits of patient and profound inquiry which are necessary to elicit the truths to be disclosed, and sufficient to secure him from every temptation to carelessness and dissipation: he raises up a Newton. Suppose after

[&]quot;This is merely an attempt to explain the manner in which volition arises: there can be no doubt that the will is invariably determined by the greater apparent good: or to state the fact more generally, the will is invariably determined by motive, and with a steadiness and strength always in proportion to the uniformity and vigor of the motive.'

having for wise, though perhaps inscrutable reasons, permitted the most low and degrading notions to prevail respecting his own character, government and worship, he determines to lead back the minds of men to purer and nobler sentiments, and to overthrow those corrupt systems of religion which have prevailed for ages, and in the support of which the passions and interests of men are now engaged, he raises up an individual whose mind he enlightens; whose soul he fills with an ardent zeal for the purity of religion and the simplicity of its rites; whose spirit danger does but excite and suffering cannot subdue; who, though cities and empires arm against him, and one general cry of execration and menace follow him from land to land, goes on with undaunted courage to expose abuses, and to call in a louder and louder voice for reformation: it is the voice of a Luther which makes Corruption rage, and Superstition tremble. Suppose it is his will to save a people, in love with liberty, and worthy because capable of enjoying it, from oppression, and to exhibit to the world an example of what the weak who are virtuous and united, may effect against the strong who are corrupt and tyrannical: in the very season when he is needed he forms, and in the very station where his presence is necessary, he places, a Washington. And suppose it is his will to pour the balm of consolation into the wounded heart, to visit the captive with solace, to extend mercy to the poor prisoner, to admit into his noisome cell the cheering beams of his sun, and his refreshing breezes, he breathes the genuine spirit of philanthropy into some chosen bosom; he superadds an energy which neither the frown of power, nor the menace of interest, nor the scorn of indifference can abate; which exhibits so strongly to the view of men the horrors of the dungeon, as to force them to suspend for a while their business and their pleasures; to feel for the sufferings of others, and to learn the great lessons, that the guilty are still their brethren; that it is better to reclaim than to destroy; that the punishment which is excessive is immoral; that that which does not aim to reform is unjust, and that which does not actually do so, unwise: he gives to a suffering world the angel-spirit of a HoWARD.

The bodily frame and the natural temper of an individual may seem, as has already been observed, ill adapted to execute the work which the Deity has determined to perform by him: yet no force is employed to induce him to do it. He is not compelled to act against his volition; but the circumstances in which he is placed are so adapted to his corporeal, his mental and his moral constitution, as to excite the requisite volition. Suppose his bodily frame is weak; his temper irritable; his mind bold, impetuous and rash, the part assigned him in the

great drama of life requires uncommon bodily exertion: he must face the storm; he must endure the extremes of heat and cold; often he must lie unpillowed and unsheltered; his fatigue excessive; the supply even of the common necessaries of existence, scanty and irregular. How can all this be without his perishing? He is led to adopt that regimen and exercise, together perhaps with that course of medicine, which strengthen his debilitated frame: gradually he is inured to fatigue and toil, and gradually he becomes capable of sustaining an astonishing degree of both. In order to ensure his success, the utmost patience, gentleness, caution and foresight, are necessary. But his temper is irritable, and his mind bold, impetuous and rash. Experience teaches him the folly of indulging this morbid sensibility; it occasions him bitter mortification; his impetuosity hurries him into errors which bring with them a long train of calamities; his boldness disappoints his cherished hopes; his rashness snatches from him some favorite object at the very moment when success is placing it in his hand. The school of life, teaches him to act better the part of life; present failure prepares him for future success; he learns that if he would escape perpetual vexation and lasting misery, he must check the first risings of passion, reflect before he acts, and act with caution.

'Suppose the disposition of another is so mild as almost to degenerate into weakness; his caution is in danger of inducing irresolution; and he is in the habit of considering and reconsidering every circumstance so minutely and so often, that he nearly loses the season of action. He is wealthy, attached to wealth, and full of the timidity which is so often the companion of riches. Yet this is the man who is to take a leading part in some great event which requires promptitude, decision, uncommon effort, unconquerable perseverance, the certain sacrifice of a great portion of wealth, perhaps the loss of all. He is not forced along an unwilling agent; he is not surprised out of the caution of his character; he does not give up his wealth with reluctance and murmuring. He is led to view the event in which he is destined to take so great a share, as so important, that even he ceases to doubt of the propriety and necessity of endeavoring to effect it, and as so valuable that he deems it worth the sacrifice he is called upon to make: the path marked out for him is so vividly displayed before his eyes. that he cannot but see it: he thinks it is the path of duty; he knows it is that of honor; he believes it will be that of happiness. His agency in this event, therefore, is now so far from being against his volition, that restraint would be placed upon that volition were he not the agent in it that he is. This then

is the way in which the Deity influences his creatures. In order to secure his purposes, he does not cause them to act against their volition; but he so impresses their understandings and their hearts, as to make them feel that their happiness depends on the performance of the works he assigns them.

' Nor is it any objection to this view of the manner in which the Divine administration is carried on, that it implies a constant influence of the Deity over the human mind. There is no reasonable being who does not exercise some influence of this kind over the minds of others. What a powerful influence does the parent exert over the child, the master over the servant, brother over brother, and friend over friend! How can I measure the degree; how can I estimate the value of the influence which that revered instructer exercised over my mind. who first imbued it with the principles of wisdom and rectitude? What do I not owe to that dear companion of my youth, on whose early intercourse with me, memory still delights to dwell; who was my superior in age, in attainment, in wisdom, in virtue; who taught me so much while seeming to learn, and governed me so entirely without meaning to control! How many of the sensations which cheer my heart at this hour, are the result of an influence which commenced at that distant period! How much of my present character is wholly dependent on that influence! It was he who corrected that disposition, the seed of which had long lain dormant in my heart; which then was springing up rapidly, and which, had it been suffered to fix its root deeply there, would have made me a totally dif-It was he who first led me into that train of thought which directed the future pursuits of my mind, placed me in the station of life I occupy, formed the connexions which bind me by the strongest and the sweetest ties to my fellow beings; made me what I am, and determined what I am to be. It was my friend who influenced me: it was a higher Being, a wiser and better friend, the unerring and unchanging friend of both, who influenced him.

'May not these considerations suffice to give us a clear and just conception of the kind of influence which the Deity exercises over us, and by which he works his purposes in us and by us? It differs from that of our wisest and best friend, only in being as much wiser and better, as wisdom and goodness in absolute perfection are different from the faint and transient indications of these attributes which are found in mortals.

The only objection of importance which can be urged against this view of the Divine government, is, that it seems to lessen accountability, and to destroy the distinction between virtue and vice. Let us not be deceived by the sound of words. When we say that man is accountable, what do we mean? We can only mean that he will be punished for doing what he knows is wrong, and rewarded for performing what he is conscious is right. It is that rectitude of will which leads him to perform his duty, which constitutes him virtuous: it is that perversion of mind which induces him to violate it, which renders him vicious. When his volition is good, and he obeys it, we say that he is an object of approbation, and worthy of reward: when his volition is evil, and he yields to it, we say that he is an object of disapprobation, and worthy of punishment. It is the nature of his volition which determines our notion respecting his worth or his demerit. We neither do nor ought to regard the cause of his volition. It is the evil of his will of which we disapprove, and to which it is necessary to apply the discipline of correction.

'You demand why, since my volition is independent of myself, and excited by circumstances over which I have no control, am I accountable for its nature, or liable to punishment if it be evil? The reply is obvious. This objection is founded on the implied presumption that volition is induced at the pleasure of the mind, and that it is the exertion of this power in exciting an evil volition which constitutes guilt. For when it is asked, why am I to be punished for my volition, since it is independent of myself? the inquirer must pre-suppose that he is to be punished for his volition because it is dependent upon himself, which is assuming as true the very point in dispute, and raising an objection on that assumption. If, however, there be any truth in the account which has been given of the

origin of volition, that assumption is totally fallacious.

'I am not to be punished for my volition, you say, because it is independent of myself and excited by circumstances over which I have no control. I reply, if your volition be evil, and you obey, it is that very circumstance which renders you worthy of punishment; and that the dependence or independence of the volition on yourself does not at all affect the question. Your volition is evil: you deserve punishment: why? In order that that evil volition may be corrected. Punishment is not retrospective but prospective. You are to be punished not because you have yielded to an evil volition; but in order that you may yield to an evil volition no more. To inflict pain for the past, any further than the past has reference to the future. is revenge, not punishment: were it perfectly certain that an evil volition which is past would be attended with no ill consequences in time to come, it would be neither necessary nor just to visit it with suffering; but because an evil volition is evil, that is, because it tends to produce unhappiness, it is to be

punished, in order that the misery it threatens may be prevented. It is the incorrect conception which is formed of the nature and object of punishment, therefore, which lies at the foundation of this objection, and which makes the subject appear so difficult to many persons; and I cannot but think that all doubt and difficulty respecting it will be removed from the mind of every one who will consider with attention what is said on this subject in the third chapter of this work.

'The train of circumstances in which an individual has been placed, has given rise to a disposition, the indulgence of which is incompatible with his own happiness, and with that of his fellow beings. This disposition it is necessary to correct: this correction is accomplished by causing him to pass through another train of circumstances which makes him feel the evil of his conduct; and this discipline, being attended with suffering,

is expressed by the term punishment.

'Such, then, being the foundation of praise and blame; of reward and punishment; it is obvious, that a person is an object of moral approbation, and is worthy of reward, when his volition is good, and when he obeys that volition; that he is an object of moral disapprobation, and is worthy of punishment, when his volition is evil, and when, notwithstanding the voice which speaks within him, and which warns him of its nature, he yields to its impulse. The gold which incites the midnight plunderer to rob, is not blameable, though it is the immediate cause of the volition which induces the evil deed: it is the volition itself which is evil, and which requires to be rectified; and punishment is the process, the moral discipline, by which its correction is effected.

'Thus, then, we seem to have a clear and just conception of the manner in which the whole train of circumstances which form the character and induce the conduct of moral agents, may be entirely the appointment of the Deity, while the agents themselves are at the same time the subjects of praise and

blame, of reward and punishment.

Were there no evil in the world, there could be no possible objection to this view of the subject.* Were every one virtuous and happy, every heart would rejoice to trace to the Deity its excellencies and its pleasures. But how can he who is perfect in benignity, be the author of evil? It is this which per-

[&]quot;Neither would there be the same objection to it in the minds of many persons, did it only attribute to the Deity the production of natural evil. But the misery occasioned by an earthquake or by disease, is often as great as that produced by the bad passions of mankind: and it is altogether as difficult to account for the existence of natural as of moral evil. Indeed, the same account must be given of both.' .

plexes the mind; and the answer to the question involves the great inquiry about which intelligent and pious persons have in all ages exercised their most anxious thoughts, and leads directly to the consideration of the design of the Deity in the administration of the world. Into the consideration of this subject we shall enter in the next section: but before proceeding to it, it may be proper to notice an objection, of minor importance, which is sometimes urged against the doctrine of providence, and which has been stated and answered in so excellent a manner by Dr. Price, in his admirable Disquisition on Providence, (p. 47,) that it seems a kind of injustice to the subject to employ any language but his own.

of the world, and representing it as a production more imperfect than any work of human art, to maintain that it cannot subsist of itself, or that it requires the hand of its Maker to be

always at it to continue its motions and order.

chine or perpetual movement for answering any particular purpose, there always belongs some first mover, some weight or spring, or other power which is continually acting upon it, and from which all its motions are derived: nor, without such power, is it possible to conceive of any such machine. The machine of the universe then, like all besides analogous to it, of which we have any idea, must have a first mover. Now it has been demonstrated that this first mover cannot be matter itself. It follows, therefore, that this objection is so far from being of any force, that it leads us to the very conclusion which it is

brought to overthrow.

The excellence of a machine by no means depends on its going properly of itself, for this is impossible; but on the skill with which its various parts are adjusted to one another, and all its different effects are derived from the constant action of some power. What would indeed make a machine appear imperfect and deformed is, assigning a separate power to every distinct part, without allowing any place for mechanism; and, in like manner, what would really make the frame of nature appear imperfect and deformed is, resolving phenomena too soon to the Divine agency, or supposing it the immediate cause of every particular effect. But I have not been pleading for this, but only, that however far mechanism may be carried and the chain of causes extend in the material universe, to the Divine power exerted continually in all places, every law and every effect and motion in it must be at last resolved. This is a conclusion which the modern improvements in natural philosophy have abundantly confirmed, and which some of the first and best philosophers have received; nor can that philosophy be otherwise than little and contemptible which hides the Deity from our views, which excludes him from the world, or does not terminate in the acknowledgment and adoration of him as the maker, preserver and ruler of all things." '*

ART. XXIV.

Explanation of John viii, 21.

'Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way; and ye shall seek me; and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come.' John viii, 21.

This is the passage which has been commonly repeated under the following noted but spurious form: 'If ye die in your sins, whither I go, ye cannot come.' Let us not be thought hypercritical in remarking that this variation from the genuine reading of the text, though trifling indeed as to the words, is very important as to the sense. One thing is manifest: it would make the inability of the Jews to go whither Christ went. depend on the condition of their dying in their sins; so that if they did not die in their sins, they could come whither he was going. Now, this idea our Saviour neither expressed nor intended. He did not express it, as the reader may see by casting his eye again on the text itself, where he will find four assertions, each separate from the others: 1. I go my way; 2. ye shall seek me; 3. and shall die in your sins; 4. whither I go ye cannot come. All these were positive, unconditional facts, and so far as regarded their truth, independent on

only out of the universe. It appeared to him much more just and reasonable to suppose that the whole chain of causes, or the several series of them, should centre in him as their source, and the whole system appear depending on him the only independent cause." Ibid. Sect. 5.

^{* &}quot; The philosopher who overlooks the traces of an all-governing Deity in nature, contenting himself with the appearances of the material universe only, and the mechanical laws of motion, neglects what is most excellent; and prefers what is imperfect to what is supremely perfect, finitude to infinity, what is narrow and weak, to what is unlimited and almighty, and what is perishing to what endures forever." Mr. Maclaurin's Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Discoveries, Book IV. Chap. ix. Sect. 1.

"" Sir Isaac Newton thought it most unaccountable to exclude the Deity

each other. That the Jews should not be able to come whither he was going, was absolute, and depended no more on the condition of their dying in their sins, than their dying in their sins depended on the condition of their seeking him. So much may be observed on the language of the text. And with regard to our Saviour's meaning, it is certain that he did not intend to intimate the conditionality commonly attributed to his words; because he afterwards assured his own disciples, who did not die in their sins, that they could not come whither he was going, in the same sense in which the Jews would be unable: 'Little children,' said he, 'yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the Jews, whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you.' Accordingly there was to be, in this one respect, the same event, whether they died in their sins or not: in both cases indiscriminately,

they could not come whither he was going.

Our Saviour's meaning in both of these passages, will be clear enough, when we shall have brought into view the respective circumstances that occasioned the remarks. When he addressed the Jews, they were seeking to take him in order to put him to death; 2 and the seventh and eighth chapters of St John (the context of the passage under examination,) are occupied with an account of the events and conversation which then occurred. Hunted from place to place, Christ turned to his deadly pursuers, and in the language of persecuted innocence, reminded them that he was fast hastening to that rest were the wicked cease from troubling: 'I go my way.' It was but six months before his crucifixion. He told them that their time was short, for he was soon to go beyond the reach of their murderous attempts, where they could not come to molest him. So indeed the Jews understood him; for they said among themselves, whither will he go, that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?'3 Will he kill himself? because he saith, whither I go ye cannot come.'4 When, again, Christ addressed his disciples, it was the night on which he was betrayed. To fix their attention on the few instructions he was about to give them, and to prepare them to receive these commands as his dying words, he told them that he should be with them but a little while;

John xiii, 33. John vii, 25, 30, 32, 45, 46.—viii, 6, 37, 40, 59. John vii, 35, compared with 33, 34. viii, 22, compared with 21.

and that in a short time they would seek in vain to approach him, as then, in order to obtain his personal advice and direction. Having thus impressed their minds, he added, in the very next words, 'A new commandment I give unto you,' &c.1

H. B. 2d.

ART. XXV.

1. God's Temple.

"The heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" Isaiah Irvi, I.

Tell me no more that God is there Where pride and passion kneel; Where bigot wrath pours out in prayer Its fierce, untiring zeal; The gaudy trappings of an hour, The cowl, the stole, the gown Have not, nor e'er can have, the power To call God's spirit down.

His temple is the universe;—
Its pillars are the mountains;
And ceaseless streams of music burst
From earth, its woods and fountains;—
Its dome, the heavens, where starry words
Proclaim his love and power,
And light and life, like spirit-birds²
On earth's weak children shower.

His is the house not made with hands, Eternal in the skies;
His is the glorious crown that stands,
B ight with etherial dyes;
There shall his saints be ever blest,
In mansions pure and fair,
There shall his peace-robed children rest,
And crowns of glory wear.

S. F. S.

John xiii, 34, compared with 33.
 And he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove.' St Matthew, iii, 16.

2. Invocation to Winter.

From polar worlds, where endless frost Has chained the ocean to the coast, Parent of storms, chill Winter! rise, And roll thy clouds o'er southern skies.

On Greenland's hills of cheerless white, Descend, in mingled storm and night, Burst her tall rocks, with frightful roar, And hurl their fragments round the shore. Thence stooping on the darkening wave, Where Davis' flood and Hudson's rave, Thine ice fields urge, through midnight seas, To their tremendous revelries. Sweep o'er the mountains, from the shore Of bleak and barren Labrador; And sailing down the frozen globe, Spread forth thine all investing robe O'er Canada's outstretching scene, And Brunswick's hills of evergreen; Till last, amid our southern skies, Thy blackening tempests frowning rise,

Come, Winter, come! and bring again Health, vigour, pleasure, in thy train. The town shall pour a joyous throng In gliding cars, the streets along, To breathe fresh vigour from thy gale, As forth they rush o'er hill and dale, With merry bells, whose changing sound Shall ring from all the country round. Open Mirth and lively Glee, Dance and Frolic come with thee; Labor looks with cheerful smile, And even Drudgery rests a while.

But chief, O Winter, with thee bring
Thy long and hallowed evening.
Scon as the short lived day is past,
We'll close the doors and shutters fast;
A blazing fire shall light the room;
And friends, with gladdening looks, shall come
To spend an hour,—yet, heedless, stay,
And charm the evening all away.
Or books shall cheer its lonely flight,
In study, to the depth of night;
While still, with ceaseless sigh, and slow,
Descends, without, the drifting snow;
Or in loud gusts, the howling blast
Shakes the firm roof, and hurries past.

ART. XXVI.

' God will have all men to be saved.'

A SERMON. 1 Tim. ii. 3-6.—'For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.'

My heart beats high with pleasurable emotions when it is my privilege to come before my brethren, with the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; but those emotions are changed into sorrow, when duty calls me to turn aside, for the purpose of exposing the errors and defection of our fellow men. That sorrow is now felt. That my mind has been wrought upon by the occurrences of the last week, I am frank to acknowledge. I have attended closely the recent protracted meeting which has been held in our neighborhood. I have heard the name of our holy Father in heaven most unkindly dishonored, and the mission of the Lord Jesus wounded in the house of his professed friends. I have seen portentous clouds of infinite wrath spread out over a religious altar, before which congregations of loving mothers and affectionate daughters have assembled to worship their God. I have met, in the street, the kind husband and tender father, down whose cheek I saw the big tear flow, whose anguished heart choked his words when he endeavored to give them utterance, because the companion of his life, and mother of his children, had neglected her family to follow her church in their endeavors to produce an excitement in our social circle. With these things, my heart, during the past week, has been severely tried and deeply wounded. I may notice, in a proper way, the doings of the last week, more particularly; but this evening's labor is to be devoted to a consideration of the text, by way of reply to the use which our neighbor, Rev. J. H. Fairchild, made of it, on last Thursday evening. The passage before us, is one of those spiritual weapons, which we, in times past, have successfully used in the defence of Universal Grace. Our brother has endeavored to wrest this from our hands. But before we shall quietly lay down our arms, we must be convinced that we have good reasons for so doing. We must be convinced that our

armor is not the armor of God. The subject before us is of the highest importance, and we are willing to rest upon it our whole faith.

After noticing the context in an appropriate manner, our neighbor undertook to correct the translation in the text; and informed us that where it says-' Who will have all men to be saved '-the verse would be better given, and the original better expressed, if it read, who is willing to have all men to be saved. He endeavored to impress the idea, that the will of God, here referred to, was not a will of purpose, but simply a wish, desire, or willingness. We regret that our brother undertook to meddle with the original in this case, for he is certainly wrong concerning it. The original is entirely against him; but he must have been ignorant of the fact. God forbid, that we should accuse him of wilfully misrepresenting this subject. If I prove him wrong, my hearers, will be charitable, and impute that wrong to our brother's ignorance. To be sure, in one of his printed sermons, he informs us that 'the best of men have sad remains of the corrupt nature; but they should not be brought into this account, although we may charitably class him in such society.

The original word here translated will, and which our brother says should be rendered, is willing, is the verb, βελει. What rules of grammar can justify him in changing a verb into a participle, preceded by a nominative case, we know not. If his constructions were correct, the original would be βελων.

To satisfy the hearer on this subject, we will quote other passages where the same word is found in the original, and the same translation in our common version. See Matt. viii, 3: 'And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, (the leper) saying I will; (βελει) be thou clean.' Here is the same original word, only in the first person. Jesus did not mean by saying, I will, that he simply wished or desired that the leper should be cleansed; but his will was a will of purpose, and the leper was cleansed by it. See John v. 21: the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will,'-not, whom he is willing, as our brother would read it. Here the original is θελει, precisely the same as found in the text. This word is found twice in Rom. ix. 18: 'Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.' In these and in many other passages, the word will, is a translation of the same original word, found in our text.

We have said enough concerning the original, and the use made of it by our reverend brother. It is true he informed us last week, in public, that he enjoyed the benefits of a college, as the classmate of the late Dr Cornelius; but we must leave the Dr's classmate, in the hands of those capable of judging

how well he sustains his college honors.

The text says that 'God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.' We will endeavor to prove that the will of God, here mentioned is a will of purpose. The author of our text most manifestly alludes to this will of God, in his letter to the Ephesians. These are his words: 'Wherein he hath abounded toward us, in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his WILL, according to his good pleasure, which he hath PURPOSED in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.' Eph. i. 8, 9, 10. Here we are told plainly what the will of God is; and we are as plainly told that it is a will of purpose. What is it? It is to gather together in one, all things in Christ. When? In the dispensation of the fulness of times: in that 'due time' mentioned in our text, when it shall be testified that Jesus gave himself a ransom for all. When all things are gathered together in Christ, then it will be most clearly proved that he gave himself a ransom for all. It is the will and purpose of God, that all men should thus be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth. We would here just remark that our brother left out of his text and out of his sermon, the words— 'to be testified in due time.' The text reads, 'Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' Why he omitted the last clause, we cannot conceive, unless it contained a sentiment to which he could not subscribe, and which could not easily be reconciled with the views which he wished to inculcate. This brother, we are sorry to say, is in the habit of dividing and mutilating passages of Scripture in a manner, which is calculated to create suspicions, which we are very unwilling to indulge concerning any gospel minister. Our brother did most correctly observe that the word all, in our text, did mean all mankind; and that 'no twisting and turning could make it prove anything else'-that it was an unwarrantable perversion to say it meant only the elect. Our brother spoke from experience when he said this. He well knows

that the order to which he belongs, in past years, has been in the habit of 'twisting and turning,' and perverting this passage in the manner which he named; and it is not a year ago since one of his own church, in conversation with your speaker, endeavored to twist, and turn and pervert this very passage in the way, which he now reprobates; and we presume that Mr F. himself has but recently found that this is wrong. But we are glad to witness the evident advances of redeeming light. He now says that God is willing that all men without exception should be saved. He quoted a passage from Isa. xlv, to prove this. 'Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.' This he thought was sufficient to prove that God was willing that mankind should be saved, and if they went to hell, it was their own fault. We readily acknowledge that this passage does prove that God is willing that all men should be saved; but why did not our friend quote the words which follow. If he had done this, he must have found that not simply the willingness of God is here expressed, but a strong, fixed, unalterable purpose. Notice how the passage and the words following read: 'Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.' This not only proves God is willing that all the ends of the earth should be saved, but he has sworn that every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear that in him they have righteousness and strength. Here is another instance of our brother's quoting part of a passage, and omitting that which would be against his proposition.

Supposing we allow what our brother very strenuously urged, that God does sincerely desire the salvation of all men; is not this good proof that all men will be saved? Are not the desires of God executed? Shall we dare bring him down to a level with weak mortals, and say that he, like them, is every day mourning over ungratified desires? As well might we assert that there is no God, as thus prostrate his perfect character. The Scriptures do positively assert that, 'the desire of the righteous shall be granted.' If the righteous God desires the salvation of all men, no power in heaven, earth, or hell can prevent that desire from being granted. Our brother

stated in strong terms that God sent his only son to die for the world; that he furnished the gospel of infinite grace, because he wished to have all men saved. Very true, we acknowledge What is the result? Is it that part of mankind will be endlessly damned? Let the Bible speak: 'The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands;' the hands of Jesus. 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.' If the Lord Jesus is satisfied, and God's pleasure does prosper in his hand, will not all men be saved? This is God's pleasure, and shall prosper. God's word, we are told was given because he desired to save all. That word, God himself declares, has gone out of his mouth in righteousness, and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. If then he has sent it to save all men, the work will be done. God's existence is not more certain.

I am aware that our brother contended vehemently, that although God desires that all men should repent and be saved, he will not compel them to repent and to be saved, against their will. This is a very singular proposition. Who ever heard of such a thing as an unwilling repentance? Repentance is a thing which has its seat in the heart, and it can never be in any man's heart, unless there be a consent. No man can be saved against his will; so long as the will and affections of men are estranged from God and holiness, so long they are not saved. When our brother talked about God's compelling men to repent and be saved against their will, he talked about an impossibility. It is just as impossible for men to repent and be saved against their will, as it is for them to love God against their will. If God desires the repentance and salvation of all men, he desires the means as well as the result; if he controls the result, he directs the means. When the Scriptures say that 'God has highly exalted Jesus, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,' it is by no means to be supposed that they will bow and confess unwillingly. God said concerning the rebellious house of Israel, 'I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.' This is all the compulsion which is necessary for God to use toward any of his children, in order to produce their repentance and salvation. The moment he puts his laws into their minds, and writes them in their hearts, they will repent, they will be saved, they will be unto him a people, and he will be unto them a God. When his laws are in their hearts, they will love him supremely, and their neighbors as themselves; and they will do it willingly; for the good reason, they cannot do it otherwise. We would just ask our brother, who was so tenacious of the idea that God would not compel men to heaven, whether he will compel them to hell! Compulsion in either case would be a violation of the human will, which our brother thinks God is very scrupulous to regard. We believe, with the Psalmist, that God's people will be willing in the day of his power. Ps. cx. 3: All shall be taught of God from the least to the greatest, and all shall be willing in the day of his power; for he will work in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

In Isa. xxv, the joys of God's kingdom are represented by a feast made unto all people; and in due time all the hungering and thirsting children of God will be happy guests at that high and intellectual banquet. They will go there as willingly as did the hungry and naked prodigal to his father's house, in which was bread enough and to spare. At that high feast, its guests will not be annoyed by the terrors of death, for death will be swallowed up in victory; there, no bitter tears of grief will flow, for tears will be wiped from off all faces; there, no sorrow will prey on despairing hearts, for sorrow and sighing will have fled away; there God will be all in all, and the wickedness of the wicked will have

come to an end.

Our brother, whose sermon we are reviewing, said, near the commencement of his remarks, that our text means that all men need salvation from endless ruin. This we consider an unwarrantable assertion, without the least evidence. That man was ever exposed to endless ruin, cannot be, if God is the merciful ruler of the universe. The plastic hand of our high Orignal would not have waked up the slumbering elements, and of them constructed the noble creature, man, to have exposed him to endless ruin. For a higher and nobler end was man made, and so surely as God is wise, so surely as he is not disappointed, man must finally arrive to the high destination for which he was created.

In the sequel of his discourse, our brother said, that all

mankind had broken the divine law, and were under the sentence of eternal damnation. Divine justice must be satisfied. Jesus was made man, that he might be a sacrifice, to redeem man from the penalty of eternal death. This he did for all. Thus he gave himself a ransom for all. He impressed the idea, that Jesus gave himself to rescue all mankind from the demands of divine justice and the penalty of eternal death. Here we had no proof, and it should be remarked that no such penalty, as eternal death, is named in the Scriptures. We are as ready as any one to contend for the demands of divine justice, but that justice never demanded the penalty of eternal death. Eternal death is not named in the Bible. But supposing all men deserved that penalty, how could Jesus ransom them from it? Mr Fairchild says that Jesus suffered as a substitute. But did the man Christ Jesus suffer eternal death? Observe, our text says it was the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all. Now, did the man Christ Jesus suffer eternal death? and was the death of this one man equivalent to the death, the eternal death, of all mankind? The idea is shockingly absurd. There could be no justice, either human or divine in inflicting on the innocent Jesus a penalty due to guilty man. The idea is wholly unreasonable and unscriptural. God expressly declares that he will by no means clear the guilty. If all men justly deserve eternal death, justice must have its demand, and the guilty cannot be cleared. God will render to every man according to his works. Fellow-sinners, we are charged on our peril not to indulge the idea that we can escape the demerit of our sins, because Jesus died for us. 'Wo to the wicked! it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.'

Do you ask what object Jesus had in giving himself a ransom for all, if it were not to ransom all from eternal wo? from the just punishment of their sins? The answer is clear. Man needed a ransom from sin, unbelief, and moral death. The whole world were guilty before God, in captivity to sin and death, all their lifetime subject to bondage. We are, therefore, told that he came to deliver those who through fear of death were in bondage. His name was called Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins'—not from the wrath of God, not from the demands of divine justice, not from eternal death, but from their sins. John said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' Again, we

are told that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. He also brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Here is the object which he had in giving himself a ransom for all. It is to save men from sin, to call them to repentance, to deliver them from the fear of death, by bringing life and immortality to light. No part of his ministry brings to light eternal death and endless misery. Sin shall be finished, an end shall be made of transgression, and everlasting righteousness shall be brought in. This will satisfy divine justice, satisfy the Lord Jesus, and redeem and satisfy the universe. Then all nations which God has made, shall come and worship before him, and glorify his name; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.

We were pleased to hear our orthodox brother discard the old Calvinistic doctrine of election. These are his words.

'There are human teachers, who attach to the doctrine of election or reprobating decree—but nothing can be more false.' Here is another evidence, kind reader, that light has shined in the darkness and that the darkness comprehendeth it not. It is but a short time ago that the doctrine of eternal reprobation was as strongly preached as that of eternal election. But now we are told that nothing can be more false than the idea which connects a 'reprobating decree' with the doctrine of election. Our brother, moreover, told us that Jesus actually did give himself for all, that he did taste death for every man, and did give himself a propitiation for the sins of the whole world; and that these passages do not relate simply to the elect, but to all men. Such Calvinism as this, treads closely on the heels of Universalism, and but a very few years ago, would have been called by the very kind name, 'damnable heresy.' Mr F. went so far as to say that 'nothing but the sin of unbelief excludes mankind from being saved.' This, certainly is bringing down the course of endless misery to a very narrow point. If our brother will examine the Bible, he will find that this sin (the sin of unbelief) does not utterly exclude men from

divine mercy. The author of our text says, in his letter to the Romans: 'God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' Dr. Beecher went so far, on Friday evening, as to discard the idea of literal fire and brimstone. He said there is a hell in this world, and we need not go into another world for one. He said if we could see all the sin and misery endured in Boston, every night, we should see hell

enough. To be sure, the Dr said something concerning an outer world of darkness; but he said we could find hell enough in Boston—and every reasonable person ought to be satisfied with hell enough. We need not look for that in another world, which we have enough of in our own city. The Dr said, 'It is the gospel, and not hell-fire, which will reclaim souls.' This is good. The doctor said some things not exactly in harmony with this; but that was a matter of course. We have been expecting that our Unitarian brethren would declare themselves Universalists; but if they are not careful, our Calvinistic brethren will come into the kingdom of God before them.

There were several other particulars in Mr. F's sermon, which we should have been glad to have noticed; but lest we weary the patience of the hearer, we shall conclude by a brief improvement of the text.

1. The text says it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour for us to pray for all men; not that he is altered thereby, but that we may live quiet and peaceable lives

ourselves.

2. It says that it is the will of God that all men should be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth. This will of God we have found to be a will of purpose.

3. The text says there is one God; not three, nor twenty.

4. That there is one mediator between God and men.

5. This one mediator is declared to be the man Ch

5. This one mediator is declared to be the man Christ Jesus.

6. He gave himself a ransom for all.7. This fact is to be testified in due time.

Paul follows the text with the declaration that he was ordained to preach these things. Here the creed of the apostle Paul is stated, article after article 'Whereunto,' he says, 'I am ordained a preacher.' This creed contains the unsearchable riches of Christ, which it was Paul's privilege to preach among the Gentiles; and for the sake of this, he was willing to endure the scorn of men, the scourge, prison, chains, shipwreck and death. If we adopt this creed, may we like Paul present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God; and when we die, may we, like him, be able to say, we have finished our course, and kept the faith.

ART. XXVII.

Notes and Illustrations of the Parables of the New-Testament, arranged according to the time in which they were spoken. By Thomas Whittemore. Boston. 1832. pp. 277.

The present is called the age of improvement. We may with more propriety call it the age of exertion. Especially so, when we speak in reference to the religious affairs of this country. For, although we are ourselves denominated innovators, we are far from believing that every change is an improvement. We desire to have the minds of mankind disenthralled, but not that their hearts may become corrupt; nor that the human passions may break loose from those restraints which religion imposes. We would have mankind free, that

they may be happy-liberal, but not licentious.

No one can doubt that religious opinions have already undergone a change; and no observer of 'the signs of the times' will hesitate to say, that important changes, either for the better or the worse, are to succeed the present agitation of the mass of mind. Whatever may be the result, the watch-word is onward; and human foresight cannot enable us to predict whether those collisions of interests, sentiments, and feelings, which, by some, are hailed as harbingers of better times, and by others as premonitions of great spiritual calamities, will end in a radical improvement of our moral condition as a people; or in the enslavement of intellect, and in the wreck of highly valued institutions.

Great efforts have been made by those who adhere to the doctrine of endless suffering, to gain proselytes to their peculiar views, and to strengthen and perpetuate their influence over the minds of such among the unconverted as have been brought up in the nurture and admonition of what goes by the name of Orthodoxy. They have pursued these objects with a zeal worthy of any cause. Among their numerous plans the formation of Tract Societies holds a conspicuous rank; and much of their success may be attributed to their systematic and unwearied endeavors to scatter, throughout the country, such ephemeral productions as are calculated to make impressions favorable to their purposes. What these tracts, which

in respect to numbers, at least, may be compared to the frogs of Egypt, have wanted in correctness, has been atoned for by a kind of sanctity which has been thrown around the source whence they have originated; and when the people, on perusing them, have found it next to impossible to reconcile the contents of them with their ideas of God and his character, they have been given to understand that these are emanations from a source too pure to be suspected of error. And, whenever the pious distributors of these tracts have failed to inspire the people with implicit confidence in the purity of their own intentions to an extent sufficient to ensure success, they have resorted to the expedient of calling in question both the doubts and decisions of the unregenerate mind. In this way they have accomplished much. Nor can we wonder at their success, when it is considered that any opposition to the sentiments which they have palmed upon the world as the truth of God, has been denominated the offspring of depravity, and that very depravity pointed out as the disease to be cured by the antidote which they offer on the most accommodating terms.

It hardly need be said that many of these tracts contain interpretations of Scripture which are palpably erroneous. And it is no less evident, that, in consequence of being erroneous, they are deplorably mischievous. The evil resulting from their extended circulation is two fold. First, by keeping the minds of such as place confidence in them, chained to opinions which have not only been called in question, but refuted, they retard the work of improvement; and, secondly, by making the Scriptures speak a language at variance with every benevolent feeling, dishonorary to the character of God, and grossly repugnant to the decisions of enlightened reason, they indirectly bring reproach upon the cause of religion.

It is sufficiently evident to those who have given their attention to the subject, that the plain letter of the Scriptures is decidedly in favor of the doctrine of free grace and universal salvation. The most fastidious objector will not deny, that those passages chiefly relied upon by Universalists, do, in their most obvious sense, yield support to our sentiments. Such passages are either carefully avoided by the advocates of the doctrine we oppose, or are ingeniously interpreted, so as to have them appear to teach something widely different from the sense attached to them by Universalists. This is done at an

enormous expense of labor and time—and, in some instances, we opine, at the sacrifice of the approval of conscience itself.

Be our suspicions as they may, we are morally certain that the nominally orthodox have frequently so far trespassed upon the just principles of interpretation, as to attempt invalidating some of the testimony which has been adduced in favor of our views, (and that of a kind which needs no interpretation) by selecting passages from the sacred writings in which the meaning is not so apparent, attaching such explanations as best suit their purpose, and then insisting, with not a little vehemence, that these equivocal passages, with their own learned expositions, have sufficient weight to overbalance the oath of God, and all the asseverations of all his prophets. If this is doubted, let the ground of controversy, be carefully surveyed, and it will be found that the opponents of Universalism do not rely upon what were called, a few years ago, their strongest texts. We need not particularize; but observe, generally, that the controversy we consider ended as respects the meaning of those passages that were supposed to make directly The first and second works of Rev. W. Balfour against us. have silenced the objections to our sentiments which were urged on the ground that certain passages taught the existence and personality of a spiritual devil, and others the existence of an endless hell. And, indeed, in all cases where the arguments and alleged proofs against our views have been tangible, they have been met, examined, and, we say, refuted. So that, as a matter of necessity, the warfare is now carried on by an unwarrantable use of equivocal passages of Scripture.

No parts of the Bible are now quoted by the advocates of the doctrine of endless misery with more frequency, or better success, than the parables of the New Testament. Assisted by the honest prepossessions of the people in favor of their views, they are in the habit of giving such interpretations to these beautiful and instructive portions of the sacred writings as best subserve their interests, and then using them to sustain a doctrine which derives little support from any other source. This has rendered it indispensable to have more pains taken to explain and illustrate the meaning of the parables, than would, under other circumstances, have been necessary; and with this conviction resting upon our minds, we feel grateful for the favor conferred upon the public by the author of the work before us.

It is well known that a work entitled 'Notes on the Parables of the New Testament, scripturally illustrated and argumentatively defended, by Hosea Ballou' was already before the public. A new edition had but recently been issued from the press of Messrs Marsh, Capen, and Lyon; and it must have been, we apprehend, a matter of delicacy in the mind of the author of a new work of the kind, to enter the same field, and occupy the same ground. Nothing, we may suppose, but a strong conviction that something remained to be done that his predecessor had overlooked, or that some error had crept into the former work, which increased light had rendered apparent, could have justified the author in his undertaking. We are happy in being able to say, judging from the work under notice, and that without speaking disparagingly of the former, that we are indebted to such considerations for its appearance; and that so far from being rivals, they are companions, sent abroad into the field of investigation by those whose ambition is, to see, 'who can best work, and who can best agree.'

Such is the state of affairs in the religious world, that much labor is requisite to enable liberal christians to compass the object they have in view. They aim at effecting a change in the opinion of mankind, by arguments addressed to the understanding, and by appeals to the Scriptures. And, though all their methods may be comprehended under the general head of argument and scripture proof, still, as these must necessarily be applied to a great variety of minds, more or less enlightened, and more or less under the influence of early impressions, it becomes indispensable to the attainment of the end in view, that recourse should be had to all the aids furnished by expe-

rience and by books.

As might have been expected, since Universalism has been publicly taught and defended, its opponents have been on their guard against all interpretations of Scripture which could yield us the least support. So that, should the writings of liberal christians for the last half century by any fatality be destroyed, and none but those of the nominally orthodox be allowed to descend to posterity, future generations would be far from supposing that the world, in this day, had any reasons for boasting of its liberality. The truth is, all the assistance afforded us by the writings of orthodox divines, is to be found in books published anterior to the time when Universalism began to attract public notice; and hence, the labors both of the student and the antiquary are of great service to the

cause of liberal christianity, inasmuch as they bring to the aid of our principles the opinions of men of great learning and piety, whose authority must derive much importance from the consideration that they were uninfluenced by that party spirit

which now operates so entirely to our disadvantage.

With these facts in view, we do not hesitate to say, that Mr. Whittemore has rendered the cause of liberal christianity essential service, by placing within the reach of every sincere inquirer after truth, brief and lucid illustrations of the parables of the New Testament, backed by the dispassionate testimony of divines whose names are revered by all denominations. And, though we do not intend to speak disrespectfully of his own views of these interesting portions of Scripture, his work will, we think, sustain its claims upon the attention and respect of the public, chiefly from the use he has made of the authority above mentioned. For, while it may admit of a doubt whether the interpretations given by the author of the work which we have found it necessary to mention in connexion with this, are not equally entitled to consideration, there can be no uncertainty as to the importance of the labors of Mr Whittemore in collecting from the standard authors of other denominations such admissions as are to our advantage.

Having said thus much of this distinguishing characteristic of the work before us, we may be excused for laying before our readers a few examples of the manner in which the author has availed himself of the labors of others. One instance of this kind occurs in his notes on the parable of the Tares of the field, which has been frequently employed to sustain the doctrine of future interminable punishment. After raising the inquiry 'To what time did Jesus refer by "the harvest" which he said should take place at the end of the (aion) world?' and justly observing that 'by the answer to the question it is settled whether the event of this parable refer to the future existence of mankind, or whether it had its proper fulfilment at the time of the destruction of the Jewish state,' the author goes on to

observe that

^{&#}x27;The phrase rendered 'end of the world,' is sunteleia tou aionos, and signifies literally, the conclusion of the age. The same expression occurs Heb. ix. 26, where we read that Jesus appeared, at the conclusion of the age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. As Christianity may be said to have be-

gun when the Jewish religion ended, so Christ is said to have appeared at the end of the Jewish age. The apostle Paul stated, that the end of the age had happened in his day: on whom the ends of the ages (ta tele ton aionon) are come.' 1 Cor. x. 11. The same subject is again spoken of, Matt. xxiv. 3, where we are informed, that the disciples asked the Saviour, what should be the sign of his coming, and of the conclusion of the age, (suntelcias tou aionos.) He speaks of the end of that age, in verses 6, 13, 14, of the same chapter, and after pointing them to such signs as would infallibly enable them to discern its approach, he adds, ver. 34, 'Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.' On the strength of this testimony, plain, clear and incontrovertible, we say that the 'harvest' took place at the conclusion of the Mosaic age; and we add, that there is not an instance in the New Testament, in which the Greek phrase rendered 'end of the world,' in the parable on which we are remarking, has any other signification. It never should be forgotten, that the 'end of the world,' vers. 39, 40, at which the harvest was to take place, was not the end of kosmos, the world said to be the field, but the end of aion, the age, and unquestionably referred to the conclusion of the Jewish state. But that we have assigned 'the harvest' to the proper time, will be made more evident by the next particular to be noticed.

He then introduces as corroborative evidence in favor of his opinion the following, in a note:

'To show that this interpretation of the parable is not peculiar to the denomination of Christians to which the author is well known to belong, the attention of the reader is invited to the following facts:

Dr Hammond, a most loyal member of the English church, who flourished nearly two centuries ago, translates the phrase sunteleia tou aionos, 'conclusion of the age,' and he makes it refer primarily to the solemn and approaching time of the visitation of the Jews. Paraphrase and Annotations in loco.

Adam Clarke, who as every body knows was zealously devoted to the doctrines of the Methodist church, closes his remarks on the parable by saying, 'Some learned men are of opinion, that the whole of this parable refers to the Jewish state and people; and that the words sunteleia tou aionos, which are commonly translated the end of the world, should be rendered the end of the age, viz. the end of the Jewish polity. That the words have this meaning in other places, there can be no doubt; and this may be their primary meaning here;' but

he adds, that there are some particulars in the parable which agree better with the consummation of all things, but he does

not tell us what those particulars are. Com. in loco.

The great commentator Pearce, bishop of Rochester, translates suntcleia tou aionos, 'end of this age, viz. that of the Jewish dispensation.' 'This is spoken,' he adds, 'not of what is to happen at the end of the world, but of what was to happen at the end or destruction of the Jewish state.' In a note to ver. 41, he says, 'I have explained this and the foregoing verse, as relating not to the end of the world; but to that of the Jewish state, which was to be destroyed within forty years after Jesus' death: for the same manner of expression is made use of, when it is more certain, that not the time of the general judgment, but that of the visitation of the Jews is meant, viz. in Matt. xvi. 27, 28, where it is said, the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.'

In his note on the parable of the barren Fig Tree, Luke xiii. 6—9, the author has occasion to introduce some remarks on the words, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;'—and, as they are intrinsically excellent, and at the same time illustrative of our views of the merit of the work, we cheerfully present them to our readers.

"We shall be led to the true application of this parable, by the preceding context. At the first verse of the chapter, we are informed, that some who were present with the Saviour, told him of the Galileans, 'whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.' These Galileans had come up to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices; and when assembled for that purpose, Pilate, for their opposition to the Roman government as it is supposed, attacked them with an armed force, and put them to death. So singular a calamity might have induced the people to think they had been guilty of some enormous crime. which God had seen fit to punish in this signal manner; but Jesus cautions them against such a conclusion, by saying, 'Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; i. e. in a like way, in a similar manner. This cannot be applied to the future state, because it is evident that Jesus intended there would be a similarity between the destruction of the Jews and the Galileans here spoken of. The Saviour then referred to the case of eighteen men on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, and inquired, 'think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwell at Jerusalem?' This question he answered in the negative, and added, 'except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.' It is a fact which should not be forgotten, that there was a peculiar resemblance between the destruction of the Galileans, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, when compared with the destruction of the Jews. The first mentioned, it is thought, were slain for their opposition to the Roman government, for the Galileans had a strong antipathy to the Romans. Now the Jews, at the destruction of their city, perished not only by the assaults of the Roman armies, but they fell in the temple many of them, their blood was mingled with their sacrifices, and they were buried in the ruins of the temple. Josephus declares, that the Jews were first incited to rebellion by those who persuaded them, that paying tribute was a sign of slavery, and this became the seed of their future calamities.* When the war broke out, they were attacked not only by the Romans, but they fought one against another, both in the city and temple. That many of the Jews perished as did the Galileans, Josephus also testifies. Under the president Cumanus, twenty five thousand perished about the temple at the feast of passover; t under Florus there was a multifarious slaughter of them fighting in the temple, and one Manahem was slain as he worshipped there; that many of the Zealots perished in the temple, and washed the holy ground with their blood, and that the Idumeans coming in to their help, eight thousand five hundred of the party of Ananus the high priest were slain, so that the whole outward temple was washed over with blood; | that in that three fold sedition which arose in Jerusalem, betwixt Eleazer keeping the inward temple, John with his associates seizing the outward temple, and Simon the upper city, the temple was everywhere polluted with slaughters, the weapons flew everywhere and fell upon the priests, and those who officiated at the altar-many who came from far to worship fell before their sacrifices, and sprinkled the altar with their blood, insomuch that the blood of the dead carcasses made a pool in the holy court. At the feast of unleavened bread, Eleazer and his companions, opening a gate for the people that came to worship, and to offer sacrifice, John, taking advantage of that opportunity, sent in with them many of

^{*} Antiq. l. xviii. c. 1. l. xx. c. 5. De Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 1, 12, 13. † Antiq. l. xx. c. 4. ‡ De Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 31. § De Bell. Jud. l. iv. c. 14. ¶ De Bell. Jud. l. xvi. c. 17.

his party, having short swords under their garments, who invaded Eleazer's party, and filled that temple with the blood of the Zealots, and of the people; * and when Titus fought against the temple, a multitude of dead bodies lay round the altar, and the blood ran down the steps of the temple, and many perished by the ruins of the towers or porches.† We have been thus particular in order to restore to its true sense an oft perverted passage of Scripture. These words-'except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,' have been cited frequently, to establish the doctrine of endless torment. It is evident, that Jesus had reference to the destruction of the Galileans, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell; and says to the Jews, 'except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, i. e. in the same way, or manner; and we have shown, by the quotations from Josephus, that the Jewish nation did perish in that manner. The words did not refer, and should not be applied, to mankind generally, but to the Jews in particular. The word rendered likewise is hosautos, and signifies, says Parkhurst, 'in the same way, or like manner.' Bishop Pearce paraphrases the passage, 'except ye, the nation of the Jews, repent, your state shall be destroyed.' Hammond is to the same purport—' If you continue your present wicked practices, raising sedition under pretence of piety, as frequently you are apt to do, then as they perished at the day of Pascha at their sacrifice, so shall a multitude of you on that very day, in the temple be slaughtered like sheep, and that for the same cause, a sedition raised in the city.'|| Adam Clarke says, on the words, 'ye shall all likewise perish'—'ye shall perish in a like way, in the same This prediction of our Lord was literally fulfilled. When the city was taken by the Romans, multitudes of the priests, &c. who were going on with their sacrifices, were slain, and their blood was mingled with the blood of their victims; and multitudes were buried under the ruins of the walls, houses and temples.

We now pass to observe, that the author has rendered essential service, not only to the cause to whose interests his labors are principally devoted, but also to the christian religion under any of its forms, by his endeavors 'to make the parables better understood, and account for the imagery used in many

^{*} De Bell. Jud. 1. vi. c. 1. † De Bell. Jud. 1. vi. c. 4. ‡ Lex. sub voc. § Com. on passage. || Par. and Annot. on the passage. ¶ Com. on the passage. See also a very valuable note in Whitby's Commentary on this passage, who adduces the authority of Grotius to the same point.

of them, by a reference to the laws, customs, and habits of eastern nations,' as also to the places where some of these instructive scenes were laid. In this, we think he has been measurably successful; as much so as the limits of the work would allow. Instances of this kind occur too frequently to admit of our doing anything more than to give a few quotations almost promiscuously selected. In notes on the parable of the good Samaritan, it is justly observed that 'the Jews considered persons of their own nation only to be neighbors to them.' In proof of this, a quotation from Maimonides, as cited by Dr Lightfoot, is introduced, in connexion with the remark that the Jews contracted a great aversion to other nations, particularly to the Samaritans, with whom they would hold no intercourse. It is then observed, that 'the whole energy of the parable depends on this circumstance, that the person who received the charitable aid was a Jew, and the person who afforded it a Samaritan.' And then the author goes on to say,

'The scene of this parable is very judiciously laid. Jesus placed it on the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho, because the chain of mountains which extended from the mount of Olives near Jerusalem to the plain of Jericho, was always infested with robbers. No place can be imagined more favorable for the attacks of banditti, or better adapted than were its caves for their concealment; and indeed, on account of the many robberies committed there, it was called, as Jerome says, the bloody way. The classes or stations of the priests and Levites were fixed at Jericho as well as at Jerusalem, and 12,000 of them are said to have resided there; a circumstance which accounts very naturally for the priest and Levite happening to pass in that road. It should be remembered, that they were of the same nation with the Jew; but when they saw him in his miserable condition, they passed by and gave him no relief.'

The quotation from Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, is sufficiently interesting to justify its insertion at length.

'In Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, we have the fol-

lowing account of this road.

'The whole of this road from Jerusalem to the Jordan is held to be the most dangerous about Palestine, and, indeed, in this portion of it, the very aspect of the scenery is sufficient, on the one hand, to tempt to robbery and murder, and on the

other, to occasion a dream of it to those who pass that way. It was partly to prevent any accident happening to us in this early stage of our journey, and partly, perhaps, to calm our fears on that score, that a messenger had been despatched by our guides to an encampment of their tribe near, desiring them to send an escort to meet us at this place. We were met here accordingly, by a band of about twenty persons on foot, all armed with matchlocks, and presenting the most ferocious and robber like appearance that could be imagined. The effect of this was heightened by the shouts which they sent forth from hill to hill, and which were re-echoed through all the valleys, while the bold projecting crags of rock, the dark shadows in which everything lay buried below, the towering height of the cliffs above, and the forbidding desolation which everywhere reigned around, presented a picture that was quite in harmony throughout all its parts. It made us feel most forcibly, the propriety of its being chosen as the scene of the delightful tale of compassion which we had before so often admired for its doctrine, independently of its local beauty. One must be amidst these wild and gloomy solitudes, surrounded by an armed band, and feel the impatience of the traveller who rushes on to catch a new view to every pass and turn; one must be alarmed at the very tramp of the horses' hoofs rebounding through the caverned rocks, and at the savage shouts of the footmen, scarcely less loud than the echoing thunder produced by the discharge of their pieces in the valleys; one must witness all this upon the spot, before the full force and beauty of the admirable story of the Good Samaritan can be perceived. Here, pillage, wounds, and death would be accompanied with double terror, from the frightful aspect of everything around. Here, the unfeeling act of passing by a fellow creature in distress, as the Priest and Levite are said to have done, strikes one with horror, as an act almost more than inhuman. And here, too, the compassion of the Good Samaritan is doubly virtuous, from the purity of the motive which must have led to it, in a spot where no eyes were fixed on him to draw forth the performance of any duty, and from the bravery which was necessary to admit of a man's exposing himself by such delay, to the risk of a similar fate to that from which he was endeavoring to rescue his fellow creature.'

An allusion to a custom of the Jews is made in notes on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which throws much light on the subject.

'Abraham's bosom. This figure is drawn from the customs of the Jews at their feasts. When reclining on their couches

at table, they sometimes placed their heads on one another's bosom, as a sign of equality and strict union among the guests. So John is said to have laid on Jesus' breast, John xiii. 25. By Lazarus being in Abraham's bosom, or lying on his bosom, denotes his elevation to the same rank with the patriarch at the repast of the gospel, and the strict union between them. The whole is a figure, however, and denotes the same as when it is said, that 'many shall come from the east and west, and shall lie down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.' Matt. viii. 11; they should enter into the same kingdom, of which Abraham was a member by believing the promises concerning Christ; and they should, by faith, enjoy in that kingdom a strict equality and communion with him.'

Nor is it among the least interesting characteristics of this little volume, that there is appended to it, a copious index to each subject, which will enable the reader to refer to any interesting topic, for re-examination. And besides this, there is also an index to the passages employed in illustrating the parables, which, to those who wish to 'search the Scriptures, to see if these things be so,' will be of incalculable service.

We close this article with the observation, that the effect of laying before the public, works of this kind, must be decidedly beneficial. It is, with us, a settled maxim, that christianity, in order to be esteemed, needs but to be known. And, that the system of grace may be understood, it is indispensable that such parts of the Bible as have been made to appear erroneous by reason of gross misinterpretations, should be rescued from the reproach which has been unjustly cast upon them; and this can be done in no other way than by the efforts of the truly enlightened. Entertaining these views, we cannot do less than commend to the serious attention and perusal of the public, the work before us. If anything has lessened the pleasure derived from its perusal, it has been the occasional occurrence of remarks intended to apply to a supposed resemblance between the case of those reproved by our Saviour, and that of persons in our own time, whose sentiments and conduct are deemed erroneous. This, however, may have been occasioned more by regret that any should have needed such an application, than that it should have been made. Few, if any, we feel assured, can read this work attentively, without being more solemnly impressed with a sense of the beauty and utility of the New Testament writings, than before.

L. S. E.

ART. XXVIII.

Opinions of the Christians, before the Council of Nice, in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Handbuch der christlichen Dogmengeschichte, von Wilhelm Münscher, u. s. w. 4 Bände. Marburg. 1817, 1818. 1809.——Zweyte Abtheilung, siebenter und zwölfter Abschnitte.

The seventh and twelfth Divisions, second Part, of Muenscher's Manual of Christian Dogmatic History, &c. &c.

Of all the tenets now controverted among Protestants, there is none perhaps, the history of which has been so perpetually and so learnedly misrepresented, as that of the doctrine of the trinity. A multitude of essays in the English language has appeared, under one form or another, and many labored works, which professed to trace, step by step, the progress of that doctrine through the primitive church; but it is probable that, out of the whole mass, not a single performance could be selected, which commands much confidence among the learned, on either side of the disputed hypothesis. Their hesitancy arises, not so much from the absolute difficulty, great though it is, of bringing forth the metaphysical subtilities of the ancient fathers in their original character and combinations, as from the circumstance that all our authors who have attempted the delicate task, have manifestly written under the strong bias of polemical motives; so that it was almost impossible that they should not, at least unconsciously, avail themselves of the extreme facility of presenting their materials either in a partial selection, or else in a distorted light.

At the head of this article we have placed the title of a work, which, unlike everything of the kind with which we are acquainted in our own language, appears to have been composed, in general, with little regard to any creed whatsoever. It is said to have passed the scrutinizing ordeal of Germany, and to have attained, in that nation of critics, the highest reputation as a faithful as well as lucid history of the doctrines of the early christian church. With regard to the estimation in which the author, Dr Muenscher, is held, by the few who have read him in our own country, it is sufficient to mention, that Professor Stuart of Andover pronounces him 'a consummate

patristical scholar,' ¹ while he decries Dr Priestley's ecclesical learning: and that Professor Murdock, formerly of the same place, has lately translated and published a smaller work ² of his, which may be considered as, in part, an abstract of that before us. The latter gentleman supposes that, in respect to his theological sentiments, the author 'was classed, by his countrymen, with Michaelis, Doederlein, Planck, and others, who stood on middle ground between the ancient pure Lutheranism and the modern neology of Germany.' ³

In the second Part of his Manual, seventh and twelfth Divisions, Dr Muenscher gives a very particular history of the opinions of the Christians concerning the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, down to the Council of Nice, in A. D. 325. We shall attempt to furnish our readers with the substance of his account, by translating in full the most important parts, omitting however the notes and the references, and by reducing the rest to an epitome. He begins with a general survey of the language

which Christ himself used, relative to this subject:

'Jesus frequently treated,' says he, 'of the Father and his dignity. He described him as the only true God, (John xvii, 3,) as his Father, and the Father of mankind, (John xx, 17,) as the Perfect, whom his followers ought to imitate. (Matt. v, 48.) Himself he calls the Son of God; and ascribes to himself, as such, peculiarly high dignity. In the discourses of Jesus, which the three first evangelists have preserved, the title, Son of God, appears to be synonymous with the term Messiah; and there are no other predictates connected therewith, than such as belong to the Messiah, the most eminent messenger of God among men. But in his discourses recorded in John's Gospel, Jesus claims for himself higher properties. He describes himself as one who had descended from heaven, and who would at length return back thither, where he formerly was; (John iii, 13. vi, 38, 62,) as one who was before Abraham; (John viii, 58,) and to whom the Father had delivered authority to judge mankind, in order that all men may honor the Son as they honor the Father. (John v, 22, 23.) He also declares that the Father is greater than he; (John xiv, 28,) and prays to the Father that he may share the glory which he had, before the world was. (John xvii, 5.)

¹ Letters on the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, addressed to Rev. Dr. Miller, &c., p. 75. ² Elements of Dogmatic History. New Haven, 1830. ³ Ib., p. 9.

'Finally, Jesus speaks of the holy Ghost or Spirit, as the divine power by which he performed his deeds, (Matt. xii, 28, comp. Luke xi, 20.) as a divine assistance, which should set before his disciples their duty, and direct them in their works. (John xiv, 26, &c.)

'In the short writings extant of Peter, James and Jude, we find nothing very definite concerning the nature of the Son and Spirit. So much the more important are the explanations of

Paul and John.

'John, whose object in writing his Gospel was to show that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, (ch. xx, 21,) commences it with the declaration, that the Logos, or Word, which was in the beginning with God, and even was God, and by which all things were made,—has become man, has dwelt among us, and evinced the glory of an only begotten Son of God. (John i, 1—14.) The apostle quotes also the expressions of John the Baptist, who represented Jesus as exalted far above himself, and as one, who, on account of his intimate union with God, is alone qualified to give sure instructions concerning Deity. (John i, 15—18.) And in the First Epistle of John, it is at least doubtful whether the name, true God, should be referred

to the Father or to Christ. (1 John v. 20.)

'Paul represents Christ indeed as man; but, at the same time, as elevated, in another respect, above all other men; (Rom. i, 3, 4,) as the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creatures, through whom all in heaven and upon earth were made; (Col. i, 15, 16,) as the Lord, who is to raise and judge mankind. (Rom. xiv, 9. 1 Cor. v, 10. Phil. iii, 21.) He says that, notwithstanding Christ bore the image of God, yet did he not make a show of equal dignity with his God, but humbled himself, that he might be like un-(Phil. ii, 6, 7.) Indeed, there are passages, in which it remains at least contested, whether the apostle does not call Christ God. (Rom. ix, 5. Tit. ii, 13.) But though he ascribes to the Son of God the highest honor and worship, yet these he represents as a preferment given him by the Father; (Phil. ii, 9-11;) and intimates plainly enough that the Son is subordinate to the Father. (1 Cor. xi, 3. xv. 24, &c.) With these representations, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also agrees; who applies the most exalted predicates to the Son of God, yet teaches nevertheless, that his dominion over all things was given him by the Father. (ch. i, 2, &c.)

Of the holy Spirit, Paul frequently speaks in his Epistles. By this, however, he often means only those dispositions which are pleasing to God, and which are effected by the divine power; but he sometimes assigns it a place with the Father and the Son, (1 Cor. xiii, 4—6. 2 Cor. xiii, 13,) and describes it as most intimately connected with God. (1 Cor. ii, 10.)

'The Christians unanimously received from Jesus and the apostles, a faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; but in the more definite determinations which they gave to this faith. there prevailed, from the first, a great diversity. Every one formed such ideas concerning the nature of the Son of God. as would best comport with the opinions he had brought over with him to Christianity. The heathens would be likely to regard Jesus as a Son of God in the same sense in which their poets had applied this title to many renowned men; and even some of the Christian Apologists did not hesitate to appeal to the pagan mythology, in order to make the doctrine concerning Jesus the Son of God, the more credible to the heathers. The Jews, at least by far the most of them, expected in the Messiah a mere man, furnished by God with extraordinary powers. Even this opinion we find among the Christians in Palestine, who bore the name of Nazarenes; with whom the Ebionites were either one and the same, or else made a part of them. They held Jesus for a mere man, upon whom, however, the power of God had descended, and become operative. In the beginning, while the attention of the Christians was principally directed to prove, against the Gnostics, the real humanity of Jesus, it seems that this opinion of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, was regarded as no very dangerous error; at least, Justin Martyr thought them not unworthy the name of Christians. They attained, however, no respect and no influence among the rest of the christian churches; and succeeding fathers, Irenæus for example, judged more severely of them.

'Meanwhile, it is not improbable that among one part of the Jews, who busied themselves with caballistic speculations on the doctrine of spirits, more lofty ideas of the expected Messiah prevailed. Afterwards, in later Jewish writings, pre-existence is ascribed to their Messiah; and he is represented as an effluence, or emanation, from the Godhead, and as Lord and Prince of angels. It may be thought that such ideas were not unknown to some of the Jews, in the time of Jesus.

Their origin must be sought in the oriental doctrine of eman-

'In the representations of the Gnostics, the doctrine of emanation discovers itself still more plainly. A Saviour, who should bear in himself imperfect human nature, appeared to them incapable of liberating mankind from the domination of the makers of this world, and of leading us to an acquaintance with the unknown, supreme God. They beheld, therefore, in Christ, only an exalted zon, or spirit, who had proceeded forth from the being of God; and who had existed before the creation of the world, and was afterwards clothed with the appearance of a human body, or surrounded with a heavenly body; and who then descended upon this earth. By virtue of this emanation system, they ascribed to Christ one and the same nature with the supreme God, out of whom he proceeded forth. Valentine in particular taught, that the unknown God at first begat Understanding, (Nove,) who was both similar and equal to the Father, and who alone comprehended the Father's greatness; but from this won he distinguished the Logos, Christ, the holy Spirit, and Jesus, as different zons. The Gnostics, as a body, were divided from the Catholics, in that they multiplied, more or less, the number of zons inhabiting the Pleroma, as they called it, with the supreme God; while the Catholics, on the contrary, abiding by the formula of baptism, [Matt. xxviii, 19.] assigned only the Son and the holy Spirit a place with the Father. *

Between the party of Jewish Christians in Palestine on the one hand, and the Gnostics on the other, there were larger and more numerous churches formed, which did not indeed hold so closely to Judaism as did the Nazarenes, but who also did not reject the historical part of Christ's doctrine, and undervalue the Old Testament, as did the Gnostics. Among the early teachers of this party, we must seek for no very nice inquiries concerning the doctrine of Father, Son and Spirit, The Apostolical Fathers, so called, were content with inculating faith in Jesus as the messenger of God, and with en-

^{* &#}x27;Some of the Gnostics, Cerinthus for example, distinguished Jesus from Christ. The former they thought a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary; with whom, at his baptism in Jordan, the Christ, an exalted zon, united himself.' B. ii, S. 161. Accordingly, they must have held that, after this union, there were two spiritual natures in Jesus, the human soul and the celestial zon.

forcing obedience to his doctrine. Learned developmentswere not their business. Meanwhile, though it was in vain that bishop Bull labored to adduce them as witnesses for the Homoousian doctrine, still it certainly appears that they taught a pre-existence of the Son of God before his birth of Mary. Thus, Barnabas [about A. D. 131,] says that, at the creation of the world, God said to the Lord, Let us make man; and he observes that, unless the Son of God had come in a human form, we should have been as little able to endure his brightness, as we are to look on the material sun. Probably Clemens Romanus [A. D. 90-95,] had a pre-existence of Christ in his mind, when he called him our Lord, the sceptre of the divine majesty, who came into the world, not with pomp, but in humility. Hermas [about A. D. 140 or 150,] asserts that the Son of God, is older than all creatures; and that he was present in the council of God, at the creation of the world. It is worthy of notice, that Hermas considered the holy Spirit as one and the same with the Son, who took a body, served God, and removed the sins of his people. The Epistles of Ignatius, out of which many passages might be selected in which Christ is called God, and in which even his twofold nature, divine and human, is plainly pointed out, are too much suspected of interpolation, for us to rest with any confidence on their testimony.

'Still, we find no attempts of the Christians to develope more thoroughly the relation of the Son of God to the Father, till, in the second century, many persons, who had a smattering of Greek erudition, came over to Christianity, and applied their industry to the defence of the faith. In order to set forth and to recommend the principal points of the christian doctrine, it seemed desirable for them to bring before the heathens a definite and sensible idea of the nature and dignity of the founder of their religion. This occasioned new investigations for the purpose of defining the relation between the Father and the Son. The fathers of the church took it for granted, from ecclesiastical tradition, that Christ was the Lord, and the Son of God, and also that he was called the Logos of God. In order now to find a method of representing this subject more definitely, there appeared to them no likelier way, than to search for explanations in the Old Testament. The term, Logos, might be defined either Word, Speech; or

Reason, Wisdom. If then they fixed on the former definition of Logos, they discovered an allusion to a Word of God, in the account of the creation: God spake, (so it is there said,) Let there be light; and there was light. This is expressed, in Ps. xxxiii, 6, thus: The heavens were made through the Word of the Lord. If, on the other hand, they followed the latter definition of the word, Logos, then they found Wisdom described in Prov. viii, as a person who is present with God. This description, they thought, could be applied the more properly to the Son of God, since in another description, which went under the name of Solomon, and which was counterfeited from the former, they found the term Wisdom

(σορία,) changed for that of Logos. (Wisd. xviii, 15.)

'From these two definitions, there arose a twofold representation of the Logos. According to the latter, he was the Reason of God, was in God from eternity, was the counsellor of God. On this account, he was afterwards styled, the Logos internal or indwelling. But on the other hand, according to the former definition, he was represented as the Logos proceeding forth from God at the creation of the world; and was therefore called, the Logos expressed, or enunciated. As both of these representations were easily combined together and reduced into a single whole, in an age when the emanation doctrine was prevalent, they would very naturally give rise to the following theory: The Logos was always in God, as the divine understanding or intelligence, but went forth from God, as the Word, at the creation of the world, and began then to exist as a distinct subject. With this theory, the fathers now connected the christian doctrine: That the Logos (which proceeded forth from God) descended to earth, became flesh, founded a new religion, and suffered death. To us, indeed, this train of deduction appears strange; but it would be very hasty to conclude, that, since the word of God of which there is mention in the account of the creation, signifies merely the creative power of Deity, and since the representation of wisdom by Solomon is only a poetical personification of a divine property, therefore the fathers of the church must have held the Logos which they found in these passages for a mere allegory, and could not regard it as a substance existing by itself. By such a course of reasoning, we should commit the manifest blunder of judging the state of exegesis at that time, from what it is now. As the christian fathers

read the representations given of Wisdom, or of the Logos, in the apocryphal books of Sirach and Wisdom, they might very easily understand thereby a distinct being; for these subjects are so painted out, for example in Sirach xxiv, and Wisdom vii, that one may really doubt whether the authors themselves meant, by wisdom, a quality poetically personified, or intended an existence subsisting by itself. The fathers of the church, however, had much occasion to prefer the latter sense. adopting this, they might hope to succeed in explaining the doctrine concerning the person of Jesus, and also to determine more definitely his nature. It moreover seemed to them, that, by his means, they could the most easily solve the contradiction, that in the Old Testament there are so many instances mentioned of God appearing, while yet he is perfectly invisible; for then they could attribute such appearings to the Son, or Wisdom, and therefore maintain the reality of those manifestations, without violating the invisibility of the supreme God. Finally, according to the philosophy of that period, God and the world, the Infinite on the one hand, and the frail and circumscribed on the other, appeared to stand at too great a distance from each other, to admit of an immediate connexion between them. The difficulty seemed to be removed, by introducing a being who stands, as it were, in the middle between God and the world, and by whom God made the world. All these circumstances conspired at once to suggest to the fathers of the church, and to render acceptable to them, the idea of the Logos as dwelling at first in God, and as afterwards proceeding forth from him by emanation.' B. i, S. 384-394.

After some remarks on the extent to which the early christians were assisted in these speculations, by the still earlier writings of Plato and Philo Judæus, Dr Muenscher proceeds to investigate, at much length, the opinions of those who immediately succeeded the Apostolical Fathers, so called. In each case, we shall set down his general conclusion, prefixing, as we go along, the dates respectively at which the several authors are supposed to have written.

Justin Martyr, Tatian, and Theophilus of Antioch. A.D. 150—181. 'Justin takes occasion, from the Christians having been accused of atheism, to state the objects of the christian worship: We reverence, says he, the true God, the creation

tor of all things; the Son of God, whom we acknowledge Jesus Christ to be, and whom we assign to the second place; and the prophetic Spirit, whom we refer to the third place, and whom we honor next to the Logos. Theophilus likewise distinguishes three objects of the christian faith: The three first days of the creation, says he, are a figure of the triad;

God, his Logos, and his Wisdom.

'We will first bring together, in a brief manner, what was common to these three fathers; and then point out the peculiarities of each. All agreed that the Logos was, from eternity, in God, as the divine Reason or Intelligence; but that before the creation of the world, he proceeded forth out of God, and began to have a distinct existence. Accordingly, the origin of the Logos, as a person subsisting by himself, they explain by an emanation out of God; from which, however, they exclude all idea of a division and diminishing of the divine Being. At the same time, they derive this emanation, not from necessity, but from the free will, or voluntary act, of the Father; and therefore, although the Son sprang from the being of the Father, he is not, in their opinion, equal to him. How they reconciled these representations with the unity of God, is easy to discover: As the Son owed his being and dignity to the will of the Father, he is only a secondary origin of all things; he is one with the Father, not in number, but in agreement of disposition, in that he does nothing else than what the Father wills. The proofs of all their conclusions, Justin and Theophilus (Tatian refers to none,) adduce from the Old Testament; and Prov. viii, 22, Gen. i, 36. viii, 22. xix, 24. Ps. xlv, 1. [Septuagint version,] are the principal passages they used. Theophilus appealed also to John i, 1.

Amidst this agreement, however, we, at the same time, meet with some peculiarities. Justin believed that the Logos was imparted to all men, so that every one received a portion thereof. By virtue of this, the Grecian philosophers had some knowledge of the truth. But the whole Logos, the Logos entire, is Christ. Of all these representations, the Platonic system was the ground work. According to Justin, the divine Logos, or the Son of God, is the original of that Logos or reason which is in every man; he is the perfect Reason or Intelligence, which comprehends the whole truth, and by whose guidance Christians arrive at full knowledge of the truth. The reason of every man is, as it were, an impression or a

diminutive copy of the divine Logos; and is, on that account, able to attain a part of the truth. By virtue of this reason implanted in them, the heathen philosophers had much truth in

their ideas, though mixed with darkness and error.

'Theophilus [A. D. 181,] is, of all the fathers, the first who employed that afterwards so current term, the Triad, in order to point out the relation of the Father, Son and Spirit; although he still did not take this word in the more definite sense which has since been associated with it, nor did he think of an equality of the Son with the Father. It is also peculiar to him, that he used grosser and more quaint expressions, than did his Greek cotemporaries, concerning the origin of the Logos. Thus, he says that, from eternity, God had the Logos in his bowels, but sent him forth from himself before the creation. Finally, he is the first by whom we find the distinction between the Logos internal or indwelling, and the Logos enunciated, expressly mentioned. In so far as the Logos was from eternity in the Father as a faculty or quality, Theophilus calls him the Logos indwelling; but in respect to his proceeding forth out of God before the creation, and existing by himself, he calls him the Logos expressed or enunciated.

'Tatian was singular in supposing that man is immortal only through his connexion with the divine spirit; but that he has lost immortality, inasmuch as this Spirit was removed from him on account of the fall.' B. i, S. 397, 398, 404—407.

Dr Muenscher thinks it rather probable, on the whole, that Justin and Theophilus considered the holy Spirit as something distinguished from the Father and the Logos, and as subsisting by itself; but Tatian's opinion on this point cannot be

traced. S. 403, 404.

As to the person of Jesus Christ, Justin appears to have regarded it as composed simply of his human body and of the Logos, which supplied the place of a soul. Tatian and Theophilus do not seem to have discovered their views on the subject. Nor is there any trace in the earlier fathers, the Apostolical so called, of the modern doctrine of two spiritual natures in our Saviour, B. ii, S. 170, 171. 160—169.

Athenagoras, A. D. 178—180. 'Athenagoras represents faith in the Father, Son and Spirit, as the doctrine of the Christians; and he calls the Son as well as the Father, God;

which title he does not, on the contrary, apply to the Spirit. It is clear also that he distinguished the Father, Logos and Spirit from each other; although he attributed to them unity of power. The Logos was described as the understanding of God, which sketched the plan for the arrangement of matter, and proceeded forth from God, in order to put this plan into execution. The holy Spirit was represented as an effluence, or flowing forth, which comes from God, and returns, back again. But whether the author ascribes personality to the Logos and to the Spirit, is a difficult question, although there may be more ground for the negative than for the affirmative. When we find him comparing the holy Spirit to the sun beams, which flow forth and return again, it is the less probable that he held its personality, inasmuch as Justin had used the same comparison for the purpose of describing the opinion of those who denied the personality of the Son. Judging by analogy, it may be thought that Athenagoras had the same view of the Logos also, which he placed in so close a connexion with the holy Spirit; and that he regarded it merely as the understanding of God, which drew the plan of the world, and proceeded forth from God in order to execute it; an idea borrowed from Plato. . . . If these remarks are correct, Athenagoras entertained about the same opinion that, at a later period, procured for Sabellius the title of a heretic.' B. i, S. 409-411.

Irenæus, A. D. 180—190. 'Irenæus likewise represents it as the universal doctrine of the Christians, that we must believe in one God, the almighty Father; in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who hath clothed himself in flesh for our redemption; and in one holy Spirit, who hath made known, through the prophets, the counsels of God. But as the subtile theories of the Gnostics had given Irenæus a disgust with all speculations, he determined to have nothing to do with any further researches into the relation of the Son with the Father; and he rejected all inquiries which had been made by others, and all which could be made, in order to explain the origin of the Son. . . .

'Though, in a certain respect, it redounds much to his praise that he had the discretion to let the veil remain on an inexplicable mystery, and that he abstained from all over nice speculations, yet it was the natural consequence of this mode of thinking, that, in the numerous places where he treats of

the Logos, a great indefiniteness of idea should prevail. He ascribes to the Son pre-existence before his birth of Mary, as many passages place beyond doubt. He calls Jesus Christ true God, and true man; and rejects, with abhorrence, the opinion of the Ebionites, who regarded Christ as a mere man. Dr Muenscher then observes, that some expressions which Irenæus uses, would lead us to suspect that he held only one person in the Godhead, who, in that sense in which he is invisible, is the Father, but who is called the Son, when he manifests himself. Notwithstanding, adds he, if we consider the whole method of his thoughts, and compare his many clear explanations, we cannot well doubt that Irenæus distinguished the Son from the Father, and regarded him as a proper person.

'At the same time, it is certain that, as high as he represents the dignity of the Son, he did not think of his being perfectly equal with the Father. He does, indeed, often call the Son, God; ascribes to him eternity; and says that he had always existed with the Father. Yet still he represents the Son as a servant of the Father; and declares the Father to be the only supreme God, and the Son to be less than he. This might also be inferred from his explanations, already quoted, of the appearing of God, so often mentioned in the Old Testament. The manner how the Son has his origin from the Father, Irenæus leaves unexplained; and he holds it presumptuous to attempt defining anything about it.' B. i. S. 411—416.

The holy Spirit he probably regarded as a distinct subsistence, though some have thought that he considered it the same with the Logos. 'Concerning its nature, however, and the mode of its origin, he does not explain himself; but from one of his expressions, it may be concluded that he held successive grades of inferiority between the Father and Son, and the Son and Spirit.' S. 417.

Like Justin and other fathers, Ireneus appears to have supposed that the person of Jesus Christ consisted only of the Logos and a fleshly body, without any human soul. B. ii, S. 171—174.

Clemens Alexandrinus. A. D. 190—196. In his writings, there is very frequent mention of the Logos; and we might therefore expect very definite explanations on the subject, especially since the author was intimate with the philosophy of

that period. But most of the passages, in which that term is introduced, are mere declamation, from which, on a nearer inquiry, no exact notions can be drawn. Whoever aims at establishing any system by a concurring testimony of antiquity, finds easy work in Clemens: the Arians, the Sabellians, and the Athanasians, can all adduce some passages for their support. But when the object is, to give a true historical statement of his real ideas, the task becomes very difficult.....

'Clemens regarded the son, or Logos, (both terms are with him, synonymous,) as the Understanding of God, which was from eternity in God; but which proceeded out from him, before the creation, and now exists separately as a supremely excellent nature, similar to the Father, ordering and governing the world according to the Father's will. He is the wisdom of the Father; since the Father arranges all things by means of him. He is the power of the Father; since it is through him that the Father performs all things. But while, in these respects, Clemens agrees, for the most part, with the older Apologists, Justin and Theophilus, he is still distinguished from them, on many points. In explaining the emanation of the Son from the Father, he rejects the analogy, which they had employed, of a word spoken forth, (the Logos expressed, or enunciated.) They had made a distinction between the Father and Son, in that the former was unlimited and omnipresent, the latter limited and in but one place. Clemens, on the contrary, exalted the dignity of the Son, by representing him as all present, confined to no place, and unlimited. Since he applied to the Son all the qualities of the Father, he approximated what was afterwards the Nicene system. With this, however, he still disagrees, in that he describes the Logos as not eternal, (that is, so far as he is considered a distinct person,) and also in that he regards the Son not as equal with the Father, but only as approaching near to him, or as made equal to him. He disagrees with that system, moreover, in that he derives the dignity and the nature of the Son from the will of the Father.

'What idea Clemens had of the holy Spirit, cannot be, with certainty, determined. He probably gave his views, on the subject, in his books on Prophecy and on the Soul; but they are lost. He only reminds us, that we must not represent the outpouring of the holy Spirit in such a way as to intimate that a portion is separated from the Godhead.' B. i, S. 417, 418, 421, 422.

We find, in Clemens, no allusion to any human soul in Jesus Christ; and he probably thought its place to have been supplied by the Logos. B. it, S. 178.

Tertullian. A. D. 200-210. Dr Muenscher first enters into an examination of Tertullian's works, especially of his controversy with Praxeas concerning the trinity, and then concludes: 'after these inquiries, the opinion of Tertullian concerning the relation of the Father and Son, may be very accurately defined. According to him, the Son is nothing else than an effluence out of God; and to describe his origin, he does not hesitate to use the very term which was peculiar to the emanation system, although he was aware that the Gnostic Valentine had used it for the same purpose. This effluence proceeded forth from the being of God, when God said, before the creation of the world, Let there be light; and then it was that the Son received his distinct existence, being in this manner begotten or created (expressions which he used synonymously) by the Father. For, according to our author, God was not always a father; and the existence of the Son, had a beginning. The Father is the entire substance; the Son is a part of the whole, from which he was derived: as he himself confesses, The Father is greater than I. Christ may indeed be called God, when we speak of him separately, as did St Paul, in Rom. ix, 5. * But if we, at the same time, speak of the Father also, we must call the Father God, and Christ Lord. The Son, therefore, is indeed sprung from the Father, as a tree from the root, as a stream from the fountain, as a ray from the sun; yet he is not equal, but subordinate, to the Father.

'And this is likewise the case with the holy Spirit, who is the third in order, and whose being must be derived from the Father, through the Son. It is from the Father and the Son, as the fruit which grows upon the stem, is the third from the root, or as a canal, taken from a stream, is the third from the fountain. The holy Spirit, therefore, has its origin from the Son, in the same manner (that of emanation,) as the Son from the Father. It is of the same substance as the Father and the

^{*&#}x27;—— Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever:' The passage in Tertullian, says Dr Muenscher, 'is the earliest example of the application of this text to the Son. The ancient fathers generally applied it as a doxology to the Father. Only Hippolytus [about A. D. 220,] follows Tertullian.' The works, however, which now go under the name of Hippolytus, are strongly suspected of being a forgery.

Son; yet in such a sense that one is sprung successively from the other. The holy Spirit is, therefore, subordinate to the Son, as the Son is to the Father. The trinity, says Tertullian, proceeds downwards, in a descending gradation, each degree of which is closely connected and linked with the other.

'According to these clear expressions, Tertullian can have thought of no numerical oneness of the trinity. When he calls the Son one with the Father, he refers to their resemblance and connexion, to the love of the Father towards the Son, and to the obedience of the latter to the former.' B. i, S. 430,431.

It is worthy of remark, that Tertullian was led, by the peculiar tenet of the visionary Montanists, to maintain the personality of the holy Spirit in stronger and more emphatic terms than any of the earlier fathers had used. S. 428.

Concerning the existence of two spiritual natures in the person of Jesus Christ, it is not strange that a writer so little systematic as Tertullian, should appear to contradict himself. Generally, he represents our Saviour as consisting only of the Logos and the fleshly body; but, at times, he seems to assert that he had also a human soul, united with the body on the one hand, and with the Logos on the other. It is indeed possible that, by the human soul, he meant [like some other accient fathers, see Lactantius, lib. vii,] merely the sensitive principle of animal life. Be this, however, as it may, we find no traces, before Tertullian, of the present doctrine of two spiritual natures in Christ, if we except one or two of the manifold Gnostic systems. B. ii, S. 174-177.

Praxeas (about A. D. 200,) is said to have renounced, after having taught, the doctrine maintained, at a later period, by Sabellius, and perhaps held, still earlier, by Athenagoras; that the Father, Logos, and holy Spirit, are not distinct existences, but only names of certain modes in which the one God manifests himself. B. i, S. 424.

Theodotus and Artemon (about A. D. 200,) opposed the doctrine of the church, and attempted, as they professed, to restore the faith to its original simplicity. Like the Nazarenes of old, they maintained that Jesus Christ was a mere man; though they still held that he was born of the virgin Mary, and that he far surpassed, in virtue, all the prophets. S. 433-436.

Noctus (about A. D. 220.) is said to have taught the modal system which Praxeas had renounced, and which was afterwards called Sabellanism. He was answered by Hippolynus, (about A. D. 220.) who, if the works which go under his name be indeed genuine, adopted precisely the same ground that Tertuilian had occupied, except that, like Irenaus, he would not attempt to define the manner in which the Son proceeded forth from the Father. It is doubtful, however, whether the works attributed to him are not a forgery. S. 436, 437.

Origen. A. D. 230-253. 'From early times, the doctume of Origen concerning the trinity, has been variously understood. Some have accused him; others have defended, or at least excused, him. These contentions have rendered it more difficult, rather than more easy, to arrive at a satisfactory judgment concerning the real opinion of this renowned man.

In the Preface to his books Of Principles, he states the general faith of the Christians of his time, thus: That there is one God, who made all; that Jesus Christ, who has come, was begotten from the Father before all creatures, that he assisted the Father in creating all, and became man in the latter ages; yet being God, although made man, he still remains God. Origen afterwards adds, that the holy Spirit is partaker of the honor and dignity of the Father and Son; but he does not here clearly determine whether the Spirit is begotten or unbegotten, or whether he is to be regarded as a son of God or not. This, says he, should be ascertained by a careful examination of the Scriptures.

'Thus far, then, did the doctrine of the church go, in Origen's time. He himself undertakes to speculate farther; and his system may be expressed in the following statements, which are derived, not from the unfaithful version of Rufinus,

but from other passages that may be depended on.

'1. The Logos is really and personally distinguished from the Father; and a pre-existence before the world, is ascribed to him....2. The Son has his being of the Father; and has existed from eternity as a distinct person. But the manner in which he was derived from the Father, cannot be explained....3. The Son is called God, and is exalted above all creatures; but notwithstanding this, there is still a differ-

ence of perfection between the Father and the Son. Innumerable are the passages in which Origen indeed calls the Son God; yet he distinguishes him strictly from the supreme God. The latter he calls The God, thus prefixing the article; on the contrary, the first begotten, who was always with the supreme Deity, and who partook of his Godhead by communication from him, he calls simply God, without the article. He even distinguishes carefully the force of the two particles, by and through, while treating of the creation: all things were made through, or through means of, the Son; yet not by the Son, but by one who is greater than he, that is, by the Father. There are believers, says he in another place, who inconsiderately maintain that the Saviour is God over all. We say not so; but rather believe his own words, The Father is greater than I. The Saviour may be denominated the image of the divine Goodness, but not that Goodness itself. Nevertheless, we may be allowed to call the Son good, if we do not call him infinitely good. Although he is the image of the invisible, and on that account is God, yet he is not the one of whom he himself spoke, saying, That they might know Thee, the only true God. Accordingly, he is the image of the divine Goodness, but not, as the Father, immutably good. Thus far Origen. Here also belong those passages in which he says that we should pray, not to the Son, but to the Father through the Son. These expressions furnish additional proof that Origen did not attach equal dignity to both 4. holy Spirit, also, is a distinct person; but not independent; and is less than the Father, and likewise than the Son.' B. i.

'We may now throw a glance over the whole train of Origen's ideas. Three hypostases or persons, the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, are the object of the Christian faith. The Logos and the holy Spirit must not be regarded as qualities or faculties of the Father; they are rather distinct beings subsisting by themselves. To them belong the most exalted properties; they were without beginning, (which Origen freely maintained, likewise, of all other rational beings); and they surpass all other things. Still, they have their origin, or source, in the free will of the Father. With regard to perfection, the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit stand in a gradation one below the other. In this Triad, there is a unity consisting in the perfect harmony of their will, and in what may be called the sameness of their being, since the Son and Spirit received

their nature and properties of the Father. But as to a numerical oneness, Origen protests against it.' S. 445, 446.

It is in Origen that we meet with the first clear and systematic representation of two spiritual natures in the person of Jesus Christ. To him he attributed a rational soul, distinct from the Logos, with which however it was united, as well as with the fleshly body. To this idea, Origen seems to have been partly led by the influence of the Platonic philosophy, and partly driven by the difficulty of answering some objections of the heathens against the christian faith. After all, it may be suspected that he meant only a moral, not a personal, union of the Logos with the rational soul. B. ii, S. 188—190.

Cyprian. A. D. 249—258. 'In the renowned bishop of Carthage, we meet with no full and studied definitions of the trinity. He calls Christ the firstborn, through whom all things were made; frequently denominates him God; and attributes to him many divine properties.... He says that the Creator, Christ, and the holy Spirit, are one. Concerning the relation of the three persons to each other, he gives no distinct explanation; but it is probable that here he followed Tertullian, whom he highly esteemed, and acknowledged as his master. However, he expressly says that the holy Spirit is less than the Son, and that the Father is greater than the Son.' B. i, S. 456, 457.

Cyprian seems to have thought of no human soul in Jesus Christ; and the remaining fathers, whom we are to bring under review, furnish nothing definite on this point. B. ii, S. 193.

Sabellius. About A. D. 258. 'The conflict still continued between the two systems, of which the one represented the Son and the holy Spirit as merely the powers and operations of the Father; while the other treated them as two distinct beings, derived from the Father and dependent on him. The former of these doctrines was defended by Sabellius of Pentapolis, who lived in the second half of the third century. He set out on the ground of the unity of God. Finding the idea of three persons, or subsistences, irreconcileable with this, he gave up the distinction between the Father, Son and Spirit, and taught only three appearances, three distinct modes, in which God manifests himself. In order to explain his idea,

he used certain comparisons which Epiphanius has preserved. The sun, says he, is one substance; still it has three ways of manifesting itself, viz. its light, its heat, and its own spherical form. Now, let its heat represent the holy Spirit; its light, the Son; and the form of the whole substance, the Father. The Son was once sent forth as a ray, and effected the institution of the gospel, and the salvation of men. He was afterwards received into heaven, as the rays of the sun return to their source. The holy Spirit is sent, for the purpose of sanctification, to every one who is worthy of it. We find in Sabellius, therefore, no new system, but only an improvement of the opinion which Justin Martyr had long before quoted, with disapprobation, in his Dialogue with Trypho. This doctrine of Sabellius found much applause.' B. i, S. 446—448.

Dionysius of Alexandria. A. D. 260-264. 'Against it, appeared the learned and renowned Dionysius of Alexandria, one of Origen's scholars. He at first wrote a letter against Sabellius, in which he called the Son of God a creature, the work of the Father, who had not the same nature with the Father, but a being foreign from him. The Father, said he, is related to the Son, as a vinedresser is to the vine, or as a shipbuilder to the ship. As the Son is a creature, he did not exist before he was created. But an objection was soon raised against Dionysius, that he had thus degraded the Son too low; and he then explained himself in a manner altogether dif-There never was a time, said he, when the supreme God was not a father. Christ is invariably the Logos, or Wisdom, Power. As he is the effulgence of eternal light, he must himself be also eternal; for light that has always existed, must forever have thrown forth its effulgence.

But though Dionysius contradicted himself, he certainly held the Son to be less than the Father, and ascribed to him a beginning of existence. When he afterwards maintained the eternity of the Son, it was not necessary that he should give up his former opinion, since he might now speak of the Logos indwelling, or, the Wisdom existing in God. It is worthy of remark, that in this point, he agreed less with the ideas of Origen, whose scholar he was, than with the opinions of the earlier fathers, Justin, Theophilus, &c; from whom he even borrowed the figure of a word spoken forth, as an explanation

of the origin of the Son. . . .

'Finally, concerning his opinion of the holy Spirit, we have no evidence directly from himself; but Basil the Great assures us, that he separated it from the Godhead, and regarded it as a creature and a servant.' S. 448—450.

The other scholars of Origen, as Gregory Thaumaturgus, Theognostus, and Pierius, seem to have followed, in general, the representations which their renowned master had given of the trinity, except that they did not hold so fully, with him, the

eternal personality of the Logos. S. 451.

Dionysius of Rome. A. D. 258-270. 'The writings which the Alexandrian Dionysius had published, becoming known to the Roman bishop of the same name, the latter thought them derogatory to the dignity of the Son. He, therefore, took occasion to explain his own opinion. Three representations of the subject he plainly rejected: the Sabellian, which denied the personality of the Son; the Marcionite, as he incorrectly called it, which admitted three original beings, independent of each other; and finally, that of the Alexandrian Dionysius, who had called the Son a creature. In the midst, as he believed, between these three systems, lay the truth: The Son should be regarded as a distinct person, who is dependent on the Father, yet eternal, and not created, but begotten. Accordingly, none of the ancient fathers approached so near the Nicene system, as this bishop of Rome.' B. i, S. 452-454.

Paul of Samosata. A. D. 260—264. 'While Dionysius of Alexandria was still living, there arose a quarrel about the orthodoxy of the bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata; who was accused of erroneous dogmas concerning the Son of God, deposed from his office, and finally driven out of it.....

He agreed with the other fathers of the church, in that he taught a Logos existing in God from eternity; by which he understood, like them, the reason or wisdom of God. But, on the other hand, he denied that this Logos, had been, since the creation of the world, a proper person. Christ he regarded as a man, formed in a supernatural way by the omnipotence of God. With him, however, the Logos or divine wisdom was united, and through him it operated; and it was on account of this connexion with the Logos, that he supposed Christ to be called the Son of God, and even God. He, therefore, distinguished between the expressions, Son of God and

Logos, which the other fathers were accustomed to confound as synonymous; and he maintained that the Son of God, or Christ, did not exist before his birth of Mary, except in the design and foreordination of God. Of Paul's views of the holy Spirit, there is no certain information extant; but it may be inferred from the whole train of his representations, that he entertained no idea of its personality.' B. i, S. 454—456.

Methodius. A. D. 290—306. 'Among the opposers of Origen, was Methodius, bishop of Tyre. In the extracts which Photius has preserved from him, we discover the same sentiments that we find in other ancient authors. The Father is, according to him, the original source, out of which the Logos proceeded before the creation of all other things. He describes the Father and the Son as two powerful existences; of which the former produced all things through his mere will, and the later arranged and adorned this production. Photius even detects Arian opinions in the writings of Methodius.' B. i, S. 452.

Arnobius. About A. D. 305. 'It appears plainly enough from his works, that Arnobius attributed real Godhead to Christ; but it is just as manifest that he distinguished him from the supreme God, and made him subordinate. Of the tionrela between the Father and Son, he gives no explanation, except that he represents the former alone as unbegotten, immortal and eternal. Concerning the holy Spirit, we find nothing definite.'

S. 461.

Lactantius. A. D. 306—320. 'This author, who closes the list of the Antenicene fathers, agrees the least with the Nicene Creed, although he lived not long before the celebrated Council.... He places the Son far below the Father; ascribes to him no eternal existence; yet exalts him above all other creatures. He believes the Son to be derived out of the being of the Father, by an emanation, which nevertheless originated in the free will of Deity.... Of the holy Spirit, there are no precise definitions in his works that yet remain. But Jerome assures us that he denied its subsistence or personality, and believed the name, holy Spirit, to designate only the sanctification imparted by the Father and Son.' S. 462—465.

^{&#}x27;At the end of a history so complicate as that of the doctrine of this period concerning the trinity, it will not be super-

fluous to add a survey of the whole, and to gather the several

remarks into an impartial result.

'The Christians agreed in believing on the Father, Son and Spirit; but this simple faith sustained numerous modifications, which individual teachers embraced according to their best judgment, and which then found among others more or less assent.

'After that the Gnostics had in the beginning, attempted to enquire more nicely into the nature of God, we find, from the second century onwards, when it became usual to philosophise on religious doctrines, two principal systems, which grew up with each other, but of which the one more broadly unfolded itself by degrees, and finally pressed the other to the ground. One of these systems set out on the principle of the divine unity; and therefore regarded the Logos and the holy Spirit only as the powers and operations of the Father, not as distinct enduring persons. Praxeas, Noetus, Sabellius and Paul of Samosata, were attached to this scheme, though not fully with one and the same decision. Others, as Theodotus and Artemon, came near to the main point of the same idea, but differed from it in not acknowledging Christ as God, and in representing him a mere man. This last opinion, how-

ever, appears to have met with little reception.

'The other system was founded on those texts that intimate a distinction of the Logos from the Father. In this scheme, the Father was regarded as one person, and the Son as another. The Platonic philosophy is, by no means, the fountain out of which this representation flowed, although it contributed, here and there, to its embellishment. Its true source lies rather in this: that the Christians, seeking to explain more definitely the nature of the Logos which was the object of their faith, brought together the several passages in the Old Testament in which they found the terms, Logos, Word, and Wisdom, and applied the whole, with all their different meanings, to Christ. In order, now, to harmonize the tenor of these passages, they had recourse to the emanation doctrine, which was already prevalent, and whose applicableness to the dogma in question, appeared to be favored by the names, Father and The system, which was thus formed, sustained, among the different writers, manifold modifications; yet there always remained the following principal ideas at the bottom: The Logos is from eternity in God, as his understanding or wisdom. Before the creation of the world, he proceeded forth from him,

without causing, however, any diminution of the understanding of God. Then it was, that he became a distinct being, a person subsisting by himself, who is similar to the Father, and exalted above all other beings, yet dependent on the Father, and less than he.

'Though later theologians have sought to prove the agreement of their theories concerning the trinity, with that of the most ancient fathers, they have all undertaken a fruitless labor. The prevalent system, taught in the second and third centuries, is distinguished from all that have since been established, although in some points it concurs with each one of them.

- '1. With the subsequent Nicene doctrine, it agrees in this; that the Son proceeded out from the being of the Father, and may therefore be called, Light out of Light, God out of God; and that he is of one, or rather of the same substance with the Father. On the other hand, it differs, in that it allows no eternal existence of the Logos as a person. His personal existence began before the creation of the world. The Son also is less than the Father. Finally, a difference is observable, in that the Antenicene fathers attributed the production of the Son not to any innate necessity, but to the free will of the Father.
- '2. With the Arian system it agrees, in teaching that the Son began to exist before the creation of the world; that his existence originated in the free will of the Father; and that the Son is less than the Father, and subordinate to him. But the Antenicene fathers differ from Arianism, in admitting by no means that the Son was created out of nothing, but maintaining that before the creation of the world he proceeded forth from the being of the Father, in whom he eternally was. For although, in describing the origin of the Son, they sometimes confound the expressions, created and begotten, as synonymous, they do not use the former word in its strict sense, to signify the production of something out of nothing. They mean simply to say, that the being of the Son owes its origin not to himself, but to the Father.

'3. With the *Modal* system it agrees so far as this, that until the creation of the world, the Logos existed in God as a mere attribute. On the other hand, it differs, in that it ascribes to the Son a proper personality since the creation of

the world; and from this point of time, maintains, between the Father and the Son, a distinction which was caused by the emanation of the latter from the former.

'4. That this system differs widely from the Socinian, inasmuch as it maintains a pre-existence of the Logos, who descended from heaven, and assumed a fleshly body, is per-

fectly manifest from what has been already said.

'5. Finally, I must institute a comparison with the orthodox system of later times; according to which, the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit, are united in one divine Being, numerically the same. This doctrine is, indeed, held for the Nicene; but it is really different, as I shall have occasion to show in the second period of dogmatic history. The ancient fathers of the church maintained the unity of the Father with the Son, on several grounds. At first, they supposed it to consist in the perfect harmony which reigned between the wills of both; as the Son willed whatever the Father willed. Afterwards, they placed it in this; that there is still but one supreme original cause of all things, from whom the Son also has his being, and without whom he cannot be conceived of. They held it irreconcileable with the unity of God, to admit of two independent original beings; but they believed this unity was not violated, if they represented the Son as dependent, and derived from the Father. Finally, they explained it thus; that as the Son proceeded forth from the being of the Father, he has one, or rather the same kind of, nature or substance with the Father. But they never thought of a numerical oneness of being, between the two. This they would have rejected as clear Sabellianism.1

¹ With the statements above, the reader must combine the fact, that the ancient orthodox system under review, does not seem to have attributed, like the modern, a human soul to Jesus Christ. On this particular point, Dr Muenscher closes his account with the following remarks, by way of summary: 'When we compare the language of the fathers of this period, concerning the person of Jesus, it readily appears how indefinite, undeveloped, and fluctuating their representations, for the most part, were. We discover that many conclusions, to which much importance has been attached in later times, were then either wholly unknown or involved in great obscurity. The principal aim of the fathers was to oppose the Gnostics on the one hand, who denied the material body of Jesus, and the Ebionites on the other, who held him for a mere man. Against the former, they maintained the reality of a suffering and mortal body of Christ; against the latter, the exalted dignity of the Logos. The attacks of the heathens, who objected that the death of a God was absurd, were the only occasion which the Christian teachers had, to point out the distinction of

These are the discoverable features of that system which most of the fathers defended concerning the Logos, and which gradually prevailed more and more. In the beginning, it had no ecclesiastical authority, and there remained among the Christian teachers a great freedom of opinion. Whoever believed on Christ, the Son of God, who took real flesh, (not merely the appearance of it, as the Gnostics taught,) was esteemed a good Christian, and possessed the right to represent the relation of the Son to the Father such as appeared to him most probable. Justin Martyr spoke with mildness even of those who held Jesus for a mere man. But soon afterwards, Irenæus regarded this opinion as detestable and worthy of condemnation. A little later yet, the dispute of Tertullian with Praxeas brought suspicion upon those who denied the personal distinction between the Father and the Son; although the opinion still continued, and occasioned many contests, until it was finally marked with the stamp of heresy: to which result, the great authority of Origen and of the Alexandrian Dionysius, contributed much. The more this system sunk, the higher rose the opposite, which was founded on the idea of emanation, and the more was it perfected in its form. Clemens Alexandrinus removed that distinction between the Father and the Son, which consisted in the omnipresence of the former. Origen deduced, from certain philosophical principles, the eternity of the personal Logos, and settled the distinction between the three persons. He, as well as Clemens and the still earlier Irenaus, rejected the similitude of a word spoken forth, as an illustration of the origin of the Logos. Nevertheless, others adhered to the older representations; and even the scholars of Origen appear not to have followed their teacher in his opinion of the eternal personality of the Logos.

When speculation had gone thus far, it could not stop here. It began to be felt, that the doctrine of an emanation, a sending forth of the Son from the being of the Father before the

the two natures; but they did not attempt any strict enquiry into the relation of these natures, nor did they meddle with the numerous difficulties that lay in this doctrine. Among all the fathers of the early ages, Origen was the only one who undertook to unfold more definitely this part of the Christian faith, and to systematize it with philosophical principles.' B. ii, S. 196, 197.

creation, carried with itself an idea unworthy of God; and on this account, some teachers had already sought to refine the grosser representations of the subject. But if no emanation out of God should be admitted, and it was still resolved to maintain the distinction between the Father and the Son, then two methods of proceeding offered themselves:

'1. In one case, attention was directed to the Logos with regard solely to what had been represented as his going forth out of God before the creation of the world. And since it became necessary to abandon this idea of his emanation, as inconsistent with the divine immutability, the notion of his having been simply created, was naturally substituted in its stead. This could the more readily be done, as the older fathers had often used the terms, created and begotten, synonymously; and their ancient doctrine of a Logos existing in God, might now be explained as a merely figurative representation. Such was the manner in which Arianism arose.

'2. Others, on the contrary, proceeded to refer the properties of the Logos indwelling, so called, to the Son of God, without giving up, on that account, his personality. They concluded, therefore, that the Logos was eternally derived from the Father, and perfectly equal to him in properties and dignity. In this way was formed the system which the Nicene Council afterwards established, and to which Dionysius of Rome had already approximated.

'With the next succeeding period, begins the fierce contention of these two systems; in which the victory was long doubtful, inclining sometimes to one side, and sometimes to the other, till finally the Nicene doctrine gained the complete ascendancy, through the talents and resolution of some of its defenders, the intestine divisions of the Arians, and the power of some of the emperors, especially of Theodosius the Great.

'Notwithstanding so many enquiries arose in this period, on the nature of the Son of God, the doctrine concerning the holy Spirit continued to stand much in the shade. Men thought very differently of its nature and dignity; but they appear to have regarded this difference of opinion as not very important. Towards the end of the period, however, the greater part held its personality: to the prevalence of which idea, the school of Origen contributed much. Meanwhile, it is worthy of remark that, even in the Sabellian controversy, when the personality of the Son was so much agitated, the question concerning the nature of the holy Spirit, though closely connected with the former, was scarcely mentioned, if we may judge by the writings which have descended to us from that time.

'From this history of the doctrine of the trinity, there flows one remark, the consideration of which would have saved many writers much anxiety and labor: The more intimately one comes to know how the ancient fathers speculated on the relation between the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, and the more he considers the philosophical principles, and the rules of interpretation, which they followed on the subject,—the less will he feel that there is any peculiar honor in an agreement with them, and the less will he regard such agreement as a sign of truth.' B. i, S. 465—472.

H. B. 24.

ART. XXIX.

The Riches of Wisdom.

In order to interest the mind and to enlist it in any particular pursuit, it is necessary to bring within the reach of mental prospect, some object, which, being possessed of desirable qualities, will call into action the affections of the heart, wake up and put in motion every dormant faculty, and engage the whole man in the acquisition of the prize thus in prospect. Among the various objects which are capable of exerting such an influence on human intellect, few, if any, have acquired more votaries than have riches. By riches we here mean worldly possessions. Various and powerful are the considerations which render riches desirable. They are ordinarily a safeguard against the inconveniencies of poverty and want; they command the necessaries, the conveniences and the luxuries of life, and give to their possessors an influence in society and the power to control the poor. These advantages are quite sufficient to engage the most of people in their pursuit, very many to incessant vigilance to acquire them, and all to desire them and to hold them in esteem. What toils have been borne, what dangers encountered in pursuit of worldly

riches! There is, comparatively, but little done in our world, but in devotion to Mammon. The ancient forests have bowed at the shrine of this idol, the surface of the earth yields him tribute, its bowels are excavated at his command, and the bosom of the ocean is burdened with his ships. The sciences and arts, have directed their needle to this star, and virtue and vice are adventurers in the pursuit. Splendid palaces, spacious domes, and costly mansions are awarded to his favorites; prisons and hovels indicate his frowns.

But the riches of wisdom, though they attract the attention of but few, are far above the wealth of the world. According to bible chronology, the price of wisdom was estimated above worldly riches three thousand three hundred and fifty two years ago, as recorded in the book of Job, chap, xxviii, 12-28. 'But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither. shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; to make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.: then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.'

According to this ancient sentiment, which we may regard as a divine truth, he who is wise enough to exercise a becoming reverence and a filial fear for his Maker, and cautiously departs from evil, is in possession of more wealth, than he would be, if he owned the whole world, and was destitute of this.

But we fear the heart may be so deceived as to think, that in order to obtain true wisdom, the riches and honors of the world must be resigned; and not seeing sufficient value in wisdom to justify so great a sacrifice to obtain it, will be disinclined to search for those riches which we are endeavoring to recommend. With a view to counteract a deception to which the human heart is so very liable, and which operates with such deleterious mischief, we shall avail ourselves of the arguments which wisdom herself uses, to draw and attract the desires of the heart. Well knowing the human constitution, and the power of those attractions which exert so powerful an influence on man, wisdom has cautiously availed herself of them, and prudently makes them contribute to promote her own wishes to draw her children near to herself. Happiness is the universal desire of all rational beings; and everything else, which is desired, is desired solely for the promotion of this. Riches are desired because it is believed by men that they will promote their happiness. Honor is sought with the utmost eagerness, and pursued by all possible means, which man can invent and cause to favor this desired end. Long life is wished, that it may be spent in happiness; and much study has beer bestowed in searching for the surest means of securing it. It would seem then, if we could promise men long life, riches, honor, and happiness as connected with the possession of wisdom, we should not fail of engaging them to seek her with all possible diligence. To this end let the following description of wisdom be duly studied, and the arguments, which she uses to incline the heart to her ways, carefully weighed. Prov. iii, 13-24. 'Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds

drop down the dew. My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid, yea, thou shalt lie

down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.'

The first thing here promised to him that findeth wisdom, is happiness. This is all that any being can want; for whatever is desired is wanted for no other end than to secure and promote happiness. A print, well designed and neatly executed, which should present to the eye a correct view of wisdom, as represented in the foregoing scripture, would be worthy of the best artist, and a far more beautiful ornament for the parlour than is usually seen there. With both arms extended towards her numerous children, she holds in her right hand length of days, and in her left, riches and honor. Surely these are objects the most inviting of any that can influence the human heart. Long life, with riches and honor, and all other things which contribute to happiness, are the gifts of wisdom. But here lies danger! Caution is needed here, lest these gifts of wisdom should so absorb the mind and fix the attention, that wisdom itself should be overlooked. Commit this mistake, and our fond hopes of happiness are as delusory as are the idle dreams of the alchymist, who, while seeking the philosopher's stone, realizes nothing but the smoke of his crucible. In place, then, of directing our enchanted sight towards these truly valuable objects, it should be our concern to make sure of that holy divinity, who has these important gifts at her disposal.

'But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me.' In vain should we offer the gold of Ophir; neither can the onyx, the sapphire nor jewels of fine gold purchase the invaluable treasure. How then shall feeble mortals obtain wisdom? How shall we become possessed of understanding? Hearken diligently, hear and never forget: 'The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to

depart from evil is understanding?'

Nothing can be said of wisdom, which can better recommend her to the rational mind, than that she is equally easy of access to the high and the low, to the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the ruler and the subject. To these considerations we may add, that she requires no delay; she does

not ask us to wait until it shall be convenient for her to bestow her favours; she never says to one who knocks at her door, Go thy way, and at a more convenient season come with thy

request.

But why should we presume to recommend wisdom in other language than her own? Perhaps, however, the reader may say, I could read the Bible without having it presented here. In reply we say, that fears are entertained that those happy descriptions of wisdom, which are here quoted, are not sufficiently studied. Be so kind, therefore, as to listen carefully to the following description:-Prov. viii. ix, 6. Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths; she crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors: Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple; understand wisdom; and, ye fools, be of an understanding heart. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. . When there were no depths, I was brought forth;

when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. Now, therefore, hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise; and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whose findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death. Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine: she hath also furnished her table: she hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of under-

If after carefully attending to the foregoing descriptions of wisdom, and to her kind invitations and gracious promises, a desire is felt to know what the fear of the Lord is, which is wisdom, the answer is found, in the quotation above: 'The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.' But here again is great need of caution. Thousands have fallen into fatal error, in relation to this subject, though nothing can be more easy to understand. The error leads to hate two objects, neither of which is it our duty to hate. And so entirely preposterous is the mistake, that it induces to the love of evil, and directs our feet in its path. The multitude, thus deceived, hate those of their fellow creatures whom they judge to be wicked; and they hate the detection and punishment of their own evil conduct: but evil itself they love. Lost and bewildered in this gross

darkness, they imagine punishments for sin, which correspond with the hatred they feel towards such as they condemn, and hope to be delivered from such unspeakable torments as a recompense for denouncing them on others! This error, this simple mistake, accounts for all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel, to the blood of those who fell victims to superstition in New England. All the cruel persecutions which have deluged the world with blood, and shrouded it in mourning, owe their origin to the mistake against which this warning is directed.

That a clear view may be taken of the evil under consideration, a single case is here presented. When John Calvin caused Dr Michael Servetus to be burned at the stake, for the heresy of denying the trinity, was it because Calvin hated evil, or because he hated Servetus? The answer is easy. If

evil, or because he hated Servetus? The answer is easy. If Calvin had hated evil, he would not have practised it on his brother; but he hated his brother, and therefore was a murderer. Now this single instance is a correct representation of all the persecutions which time has witnessed, or historians re-

corded.

In juxtaposition with the error of hating our fellow creatures, in place of hating evil, is found that of hating the punishment of sin, in room of hating sin itself. A similar mistake would induce a sick person to cherish an affectionate fondness for the disorder, by which he was tormented; but to entertain an unreconcileable aversion to the most salutary prescription for its removal. These two errors are always found as joint copartners in the works of iniquity. False religion derives all its zeal from the burning coals of such hatred. At sin it looks with eyes of desire; at the punishment of sin, with distorted features of horror. Its language is, give me sin without its punishment, and I will drink it as a beverage. To the two objects of hatred, just mentioned, we may add another, to which the deceived are equally averse; which is that light or instruction which is necessary to lead them out of the unhappy condition of moral darkness, in which they are held by those mistakes. When deception has drawn us into the love of sin, the remainder of her work is easy. She can shield us from all punishment with the broad and gorgeous mantle of piety. A widow's house devoured, and a long prayer, have been companions for many ages.

This spurious wisdom is most happily set in contrast with

the pure by the apostle James; chap. iii, 13-18: 'Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show, out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of

them that make peace.'

This is that wisdom, and these its attributes, which says, Prov. viii, 22: 'The Lord possessed me in the begining of his way, before his works of old.' This is the wisdom that constitutes the laws of the universe, and gave birth to creation. Not a sun, not a world, nor a single creature was brought into being, but by the direction of that pure, gentle wisdom, that is full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Look to the heavens, to the earth, to the seas and the rivers, to the mountains and the vallies; you see the golden treasures of that wisdom which is full of good fruits without partiality; and you hear her mild and gentle voice crying to the sons of men, saying, 'Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live; and go in the way of understanding.' This is the voice of that wisdom whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace.

St Paul has given a most luminous display of the impartial wisdom of God, in his epistle to the Romans, chap. xi. The whole of which we recommend to the careful attention of our readers. After bringing into the enjoyments of the gospel the fulness of the Gentiles together with all Israel; and after showing that God had concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all, he exclaims, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

ART. XXX.

Universalists, in their collective capacity, a distinct
Denomination.

Notwithstanding much has been said, and justly, against the schemes of sects and parties; and though much injury has been done to the cause of christianity by sectarian combinations; we are unable to discover anything that should make us particularly unwilling to be considered as belonging to a religious sect. Nor have we, as yet, been able to see the propriety of any denomination, in their collective capacity, pretending to be the only class of men who are not sectarian, merely on the ground that they have no written creeds; for, on examination it will be found, that a number of persons associated for the purpose of obtaining certain specified objects, and united by a belief in doctrines which they deem important, are as much a sect, as they would be were all their opinions written, and subscribed by each individual for himself. We look at the spirit of the thing. And, most soberly affirming that there is nothing exclusive in the religion of Universalists, we as frankly admit our willingness to be regarded, and treated, as a distinct class of the christian fraternity—as a sect, having opinions, rules of discipline, and bonds of fellowship, peculiar to ourselves. And it is the design of this article to show, in the first place, that as a denomination of Christians, we have interests at stake, and duties to perform; secondly, that since we do occupy this position, the time has come when we ought to take high and independent ground, and go forward in the work before us; and thirdly, that there are many inducements to exertion which should be suffered to have their proper influence upon the minds and conduct of all intelligent believers of our distinguishing tenets.

1. If any one doubts the fact that we are a distinct denomination, let him ask those who belong to predominant sects what they think about us. They will, to a man, depose that our doctrine is 'the giant heresy of the age,' and that all who adhere to it are, or ought to be, cut off from all communion and fellowship with them. We do not blame them for thinking and saying so, if they are sincere, however much we may regret it. The fact is as stated, and cannot be denied. Catho-

ART. XXXIII.

The Scripture doctrine of Punishment, considered with reference to Future Retribution.

In the following inquiry respecting the punishment of sin, a constant reference will be had to certain doctrines, which are believed in the christian church, and held to be essential to the faith of the gospel. This being embraced in our design, it may contribute to render our arguments more intelligible, if we first present the reader with a concise statement of those doctrines which will be called in question; that having them in mind, he may the better judge of their soundness, by comparing them with such scripture authority as may be presented.

1. Respecting sin and its punishment, it is believed that our Creator views it to be an infinite evil, being a violation of his infinite law; and that nothing short of endless punishment

can be its just retribution.

2. Consistently with the foregoing, it is believed that the punishment of the sin which men commit in this mortal state, is not inflicted nor endured in this life, but that it will be inflicted and endured in the future, immortal state.

3. It is believed that all those of the human family, who shall finally obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, will be so forgiv-

en their transgressions as not to be punished for them.

4. It is believed that a realizing sense of the truth of this endless punishment is indispensable to true piety, and is the

proper support and defence of moral virtue. And

5. This doctrine of endless punishment is one of the principal bonds of fellowship in the church, as no one who does not believe it, is allowed to be sound in the faith of the gospel, or a worthy member of the christian communion.

Having these sentiments thus before us, and keeping them in constant view, we shall proceed to the consideration of certain facts, and certain declarations of the Scriptures, inquiring, as we pass along, how such facts and declarations can be made to agree with them.

Before Adam sinned, the 'Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not

eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' The facts which relate to the subject of this divine command and threatening, and which we now wish to have considered, are the following: 1st, It must be allowed that it was, at least, as necessary for man to know before transgression what punishment would be inflicted if he should transgress, as to be informed of it after the offence had taken place. 2d, If the doctrine of endless punishment, or any punishment, in a future state be true now, it was true when the foregoing command and threatening were communicated to Adam. 3d, If a belief in this doctrine of future punishment be now indispensable to true piety, and if it be the proper support and defence of moral virtue now, it was equally so before Adam sinned. The question then occurs, in relation to this subject, and these facts, why did not the Lord God state the doctrine of future punishment in the threatening with which he accompanied his command? In place of doing so, he mentioned no punishment but that which was to take place in the day of transgression: 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' Here is no intimation of a day of judgment, at the tribunal of which Adam would be brought thousands of years after his mortal days were ended; nothing here about the intolerable pains of hell in an eternal state, about which, there is so much preached in our times. How are these things to be accounted for? If sin is not punished in this state of existence, but in a future state, can any one conceive why the Lord God should have been so explicit in stating the punishment immediately in the day of transgression, and why he should have omitted to give the least intimation of its being inflicted in a future world? Did the Creator, in this case, think it unnecessary to present to Adam this indispensable inducement to piety, this defence and support of moral virtue?

It seems worthy of careful notice, that the Creator was as silent on the subject of future punishment, in his communication to Adam and Eve, after transgression, as he was before. After Adam had sinned, the Lord God called both the tempter and the tempted to an account immediately. He did not inform them that he had fixed the day of their trial in eternity, in a future state of existence; but he called them to judgment immediately. To the tempter he said, 'Because thou hast

done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. to the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said. Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saving, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake: in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' 1 All which is here recorded, not only belongs to the present state of mortality, but is peculiar to it. Even to the tempter there is no intimation that he had exposed himself to any sufferings beyond that life which was supported by dust. He was not told that he should go on his belly and eat dust after he was dead; but all the days of his life. Lord God gave no intimation to the woman that her sorrow or conceptions should be multiplied in eternity, or that she should bring forth children in sorrow in a future state, or that in that state her desire would be to her husband, or that in eternity thousands of years after their bodies had returned to dust, he should rule over her. Nor was Adam told that the ground should be cursed for his sake in a future state, nor that it should bring forth thorns and thistles in eternity, or that in eternity he should eat the herb of the field, or that in the sweat of his face he should eat bread in a future state; but only until he returned to the ground out of which he was taken.

It seems perfectly reasonable that our professed divines, who consider the doctrine of future endless punishment so essential to piety, as such a pillar in the temple of religion, so essential for the support and defence of moral virtue, should be called on to reconcile the facts which we have noticed, embraced in the scripture account of the first transgression, with their views. Can they inform us why the Creator did not threaten Adam with punishment in eternity, if such punishment was intended?

Can they render any good reason why the Creator did not present this *pious* doctrine to Adam, and enforce it on his mind with as much energy as they now endeavor to enforce it? Was it because the Creator had but a small regard to the support and defence of moral virtue, that he neglected to threaten Adam with any punishment after he should return to the dust from whence he was taken? These queries they ought to solve; and then proceed to inform us what better reason there is now for them to hold up this doctrine of hereafter punishment, than there was for the Creator to make it known in the beginning.

Having noticed the first transgression, and all the retributions which divine wisdom saw fit to award to the offenders, and finding them all confined to the present mortal state of man, we may pass to consider the second sin of which mention is made in the Scriptures, and the punishment with which it was visited. Many and various have been the conjectures respecting what was meant by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and about what the first transgression consisted in various opinions have been entertained; but the second sin mentioned in the sacred records is so definitely stated, that no difference of opinion respecting it is entertained. It was the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. For this act of violence the Lord said to Cain, 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.' 1

For this atrocious sin we are informed, in the above quoted passage, that Cain was cursed; but the curse was not put off to a future state; nor was the judgment deferred until Cain went into another world. The day of judgment came immediately, and he was doomed to his punishment without delay. The curse which was denounced on this murderer was from the ground which had received his brother's blood; and it was said to him, 'now art thou cursed.' It was not intimated to Cain that he would be called to give an account of this murder in a future state; nor was he

told that he was in danger of being punished in eternity. He was not told that he should be a fugitive and a vaga-

bond in a future state, but in the earth.

If the preachers of the present day, who so zealously contend for the doctrine of future punishment, and who attach to it those weighty consequences which we have noticed, were as circumspect as the importance of divine truth demands, it is believed that before they would proceed to sentence Cain to a state of endless punishment, they would endeavor to render some good reason why the Creator did not, though he intends doing it hereafter; and also why it is now any more necessary for pious, religious, or virtuous purposes, to hold up this doctrine, than it was when sin first made its appearance in the world.

We have a much more formidable account of sin and its punishment, after the earth became extensively inhabited, than we have in the two instances which we have noticed. The case of Cain was evidently considerably advanced, as to magnitude, beyond that of his parents. It is very evident that the crime of murder committed by Cain, was more heinous in the sight of God, than was the offence of Adam and Eve. This we infer from what was denounced as retributions in the several cases. There is indeed some degree of similarity in these cases, but we are not informed that either Adam or Eve was cursed, or driven from the presence of the Lord, or made a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; but these weighty denunciations on Cain caused him to exclaim, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.' This complaint, we are not informed, was made by Adam or Eve, or that they had any occasion thus to exclaim. Their condition, under all the inconveniences of the righteous retributions rendered them by their compassionate Creator, was far from being intolerable.

But in the days of Noah, when men became multiplied on the earth, we are told that 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and

the fowls of the air.'1

This determination to destroy the whole race of man, Noah

and his family excepted, on account of human transgression, evidently indicates that, in the sight of the Creator, the provocation for severe retribution was, in the case under consideration, much greater than in either of the former. Even in Cain's case, God not only spared his life, but provided for his defence, so that others should not take it. But now, wickedness has arrived to such an extent, has become so general, and wears such an aggravated character, that a besom of destruction is appointed, and men are swept from the earth. 'And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.' 1

But in this most deplorable instance of sin, and its truly awful retribution, we find no mention of punishment in the future state. Even to righteous Noah, no hint was given that after the men of that sinful age should be destroyed by the flood from the earth, a punishment infinitely worse would be inflicted on them. Noah is said to be a 'preacher of righteousness;' but we are not informed that he either preached the doctrine of

future punishment, or believed it.

It is true that preachers of our times profess to be commissioned from heaven to preach the doctrine of future, endless punishment, and to represent it with all the horrors which are frightful to human imagination. But we are persuaded that it is a duty incumbent on them, before they engage in this tremendous work, to be able to account for the entire absence of this doctrine from all the account we have of the sinfulness of men in Noah's time, and of their fearful destruction therefor. If the Creator saw fit not to threaten nor denounce future punishment, either in the case of Adam's or Cain's offence, because their crimes were not of the greatest magnitude; and had reserved the manifestation of an infinitely greater penalty for an occasion which might justify its severity, we should suppose that such an occasion had occurred in the wickedness of the people in Noah's day, if such ever existed. If it be allowed

that the doctrine of future punishment is such a principal support and defence of piety and moral virtue, as it is supposed to be by its advocates, does it not lead to the conclusion that the sin of Adam, the murder committed by Cain, and the vast aggregate of iniquity which condemned the old world to entire destruction, might have been nearly, if not wholly prevented, by a full and clear manifestation of this salutary doctrine? In the light of these circumstances, and the reflections suggested by them, it seems altogether unaccountable why no intimation should have been given of this doctrine in the accounts which we have already noticed.

According to bible chronology, more than sixteen hundred years after the creation of man had passed away, when the Creator manifested his disapprobation of man's sintulness in the destruction of the world by the flood; still do we find no evidence that he had yet seen fit to make his creatures acquainted with the danger they were in, according to the opinion we are considering, of being forever punished after death. The loss of life was the extent of the retribution for transgression, of which any mention is made in scripture record, up to this time.

We may now notice the remarkable account of the sinfulness of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, together with the truly awful destruction by which they were overthrown. By the account we have of this memorable case, we are informed that these cities were destroyed by fire from heaven for the sinfulness of their inhabitants. Let this be kept in mind while we carefully examine the record to see if any mention be made of punishing these abominable, sinful people after they were consumed in the flames of their cities. After the angels had brought Lot and his wife and his daughters out of Sodom, one of them said to Lot, ' Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.' In this most alarming crisis, when the angel of God was urging Lot to make his escape from danger, it was for his life only. No mention was made of any danger to which his immortal soul was exposed in eternity, whether he left the city or stayed in it. And concerning Lot's wife, who, heedless of the angel's express command not to look behind

her, looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt, there is

no mention of her being punished in a future state.

Respecting the destruction of those cities we read, 'Then the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.' Here we find no intimation concerning any punishment inflicted on those wretched sinners in a future state. More than two thousand years had now passed away after man was created; four very particular accounts are recorded of instances of very heinous transgressions, and also of due retributions inflicted by God himself, and yet no hint recorded of any punishment after man's mortal state was ended. No, the time had not yet come in which the all-wise Creator saw fit to induce man to be pious and virtuous by the influence of the doctrine of a future state of retribution.

A few years before the overthrow of Sodom, we are informed, that God communicated to Abraham certain things which were to take place respecting his descendants, in the then future ages; some of which we may notice as having a relation to our present subject. 'And he said unto Abraham, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve, will ljudge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance.' 2 This prophetic declaration was evidently fulfilled by the sojourning of the Israelites in Egypt, the hard servitude to which they were there subjected, and the memorable plagues which a judicial providence brought on their oppress-Of these circumstances, two will be here noticed, as particularly relative to our present inquiry. The first we shall notice is the time when God judged the Egyptians, and punished them for their cruel oppressions. According to the common doctrine concerning a day of general judgment at the end of this natural world, and in a future state, we should expect to find that the judgment of the Egyptians would take place at that time. If not in this world, but in the next the sins of men are to be judged, God has not yet judged that nation which oppressed Israel. But if we are careful to understand the divine declaration above cited, we must duly notice that God judged that nation before the Israelites left Egypt; for the text says, 'And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance.' Thus we find that the day of judgment, in which God rendered to the oppressors of the descendants of his servant Abraham, the just retributions which their unrighteous oppressions deserved, was before Israel went out of Egypt.

The second particular in the circumstances of this case, which we shall here notice, regards the nature of the retribution rendered. This inquiry brings into view the plagues with which Pharaoh was threatened, and which his hardness of heart and stubborn rebellion against God, brought upon him and his

people.

The plagues which Moses and Aaron were authorised to announce to Pharaoh, to induce him to let the Hebrews go out of his land, and which were actually brought on the Egyptians, though they were fearful signs and grievous judgments, were all of a temporal nature, were inflicted on the people and on the land in the sight of living men, and were all ended before Israel left Egypt. The river Nile and all the waters of the land were turned to blood; frogs were sent in judgment; lice also; flies, and murrain on cattle; boils breaking forth with blains; a grievous hail mingled with fire; locusts; darkness, and the first born of the Egyptians slain. These ten fearful judgments seemed to exhaust the treasures of wrath which had accumulated against the Egyptians in consequence of the cruel bondage imposed on the Hebrews, and in consequence of their unmerciful oppressions. But what are all these in comparison with the terrors of the day of judgment, which are now announced by the christian doctors! and what are they when compared with the endless sufferings which these doctors say they are authorised to hold up to the people, as inducements to piety, religion and virtue!

Was it because Pharaoh and his people had sinned so little, that God threatened them with no punishment in the future world? and was it because their wickedness was so slight that nothing but temporal judgments were inflicted? Will our doctors plead that in those times, of which we are now speaking, piety, religion, and moral virtue could be supported by milder and more gentle means than in our days? Or will they attempt to assign some good reason why the Creator

should then withhold the only means which he knew would ever prove efficacious in turning men from their wicked ways to serve him? Two thousand five hundred years, and more, had passed away, from the time man was created to the time of the plagues and judgments of Egypt; Adam's transgression had received the retribution which God threatened, Cain's murder had been punished by God himself, the old world for its abominations had been swept from the face of the earth, Sodom and the cities of the plain, for their wickedness, had been overthrown by fire from God out of heaven; and now is fulfilled the ten fold vengeance of heaven on sinful Egypt, and yet not one allusion to a future state of punishment! We know that our doctors profess to be fully authorised to doom Pharaoh to a state of endless punishment, and that they quote the word of God to him, in support of their judgment in the case. See Exodus ix, 15, 16: 'For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.' It is true that our doctors are too cautious to attempt to prove that they have any authority for applying this passage to the support of punishment in another world; and if they were half as prudent in their endeavors to understand its true sense, they would see, at once, that in place of ever alluding to punishment hereafter, pestilence, which was inflicted in this state, is specified in the text, and it is asserted that Pharaoh should be 'cut off from the earth.' This is the extent, the utmost reach of retribution. And it is of importance to remark that the whole was ordered by the divine Being, not for the purpose of making his vengeance known and felt in the eternal world; but to make his power and name known and 'declared throughout all the earth.'

We shall not release our doctors from what we deem their duty in respect to our general subject. We do most solemnly demand of them to assign some satisfactory reason for the entire omission of their indispensable doctrine of future retribution for so long a time. They will not allow that men can be duly prepared for happy existence hereafter, unless they fully believe in this doctrine: How then was it in those times to which we have alluded? Did all who lived and died in those ancient times, leave the world unprepared to meet their final

judge? Even the doctrine of a general judgment, in the future state, is no where hinted in a single passage relating to the wickedness of mankind in those ages. When the Creator called Adam and Eve to an account, and pronounced on them such retributions as his wisdom dictated, he did not inform them that the final judgment of their conduct was reserved for a future world. So likewise when Cain, for the murder of his brother, was judged and condemned, and when the retributions of divine justice were specified, he was not informed that all this was only a foretaste of something future, and that he must await his trial, at the general judgment, when, in a future state, all mankind would be brought to judgment. Nor have we any information which would justify the belief that Noah ever informed the wicked people of his day, who were destroyed by the flood, that they would have to answer for their sins at the bar of God in a future state, after the approaching flood should take them away. A similar neglect is evident in the account we have noticed concerning the judgment of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim; no intimation was given that another trial, another day of judgment awaited the inhabitants of these cities, in a future state. So also, in all that is said to Pharaoh, and of the punishment of his iniquities and the sins of his people, no hint is given that they would be brought to another trial in a future world, for which occasion God had reserved the most severe of his judgments. So far from this, God said to him, Exodus ix, 14: 'For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.' This is a very different doctrine from that which teaches that God reserves infinitely worse plagues for men in a future state, than any they endure in this.

If a more genuine piety, a more refined morality could have been produced by a knowledge of this doctrine of future judgment, of future rewards and punishments, than existed in those ancient times, it was certainly needed for the moral and religious improvement of righteous Noah and Lot, the blemishes in whose characters might thereby have been prevented. But it is believed that a judicious comparison between the piety and virtue of these men, and the piety and virtue of those who are rendered religious in our times by the influence of this doctrine, would result neither to the advantage of

the latter, nor to the support of the pretended claims of this doctrine.

We may now take our leave of Egypt, and travel with God's chosen people towards the earthly Canaan, in hope that if any improvement is to be made in religious and moral instruction, if the wisdom of God is pleased to add more severe sanctions to his law, than in former times, if now the time has arrived when a future retribution, in all the horrors in which our doctors have dressed it, is about to be manifested to his own chosen people, we may find it, understand it, and avail

ourselves of its advantages.

Let us go with Moses and the congregation of Israel to the fearful mount from whence the law was given. Surely the cloud that rests on this Sinai, that cloud from which such thunders roll, in which such lightnings blaze, must contain the whole artillery of retributive vengeance. We shall now learn, no doubt, the mind of God respecting the demerit of sin and the severity of its just punishment. We can hardly expect to go from this mountain ignorant of those divine sanctions which will best serve the cause of piety, religion, and moral virtue. The lightnings have flashed! the thunders have rolled! God has spoken! the verdict of heaven is registered! Come, ye doctors who insist that neither judgment nor punishment is in this world—and who without hesitation, doom your fellow sinners to endless wo, come and read the following verdict: Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.' 1 All this is evidently in this world, where life can be taken, where eyes can be destroyed, where teeth can be extracted, where hands and feet can be amputated, where burnings, wounds, and stripes can be inflicted.

Will it be contended that the retributions which are here specified are those only which God has authorised men to render to their offending fellow men; but that he reserves to himself the office of inflicting retributions infinitely more severe? We will then bring to view the punishments which God told his people that he himself would inflict upon them for their stubbornness, and their rebellion against him and his statutes. And here we beseech the reader to look carefully, having refer-

ence to two questions; first, Is there, in all the dreadful account any intimation of punishment in a future state? secondly, Is it possible to conceive of sufferings more severe, that can be suffered in the present state, than those which are here described? 'But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant; I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass. And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high-ways shall be desolate. And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and, when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me; then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And we shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my

soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword, after you; and your land shall be Jesolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your onemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth; and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.' Will the advocates of future judgment and retribution carefully survey all these specifications of punishment, and deliberately consider the intenseness of their severity, and then gravely say that God does neither judge nor punish the wicked in this world? In the scripture just cited, God says, verse 21, 'I will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins.' Will any one be bold enough, while this passage is in view, to assert that no punishment endured in this mortal state is according to men's sins?

However important the doctrine of future retribution may be, however essential to promote and defend true piety, religion and morality, however dangerous it may be to the souls of men not to believe in this doctrine, we find we are now compelled to leave Moses, Sinai, and the law given to God's covenant people, without obtaining the least information concerning it! All the support which the wisdom of God saw fit to give to piety, religion and morality, by means of punishment, was derived from sufferings endured in this mortal state. It

is not in this ministration of death and condemnation, that we find the doctrine of punishment in the future state; if we ever find it, we must find it in the more glorious ministration of the spirit of righteousness, in which Jesus, our great high priest, 'is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' But who will ever believe that the dispensation of the gospel exhibits punishments for sin more lasting and more severe than are announced in the law?

If we examine the divine testimony concerning the Judges of Israel, we shall learn that as late as was Jotham's curse pronounced and executed on the murderous Abimelech and the sinful Shechemites and house of Millo, temporal punishment is said to be a full retribution even for the most heinous offences. Of the seventy sons of Jerubbaal, Jotham alone escaped the murderous and bloody hands of Abimelech, who was made king by the Shechemites, who thus supported him in his wickedness. Jotham, as soon as he was informed of the tragical death of his brethren, and that the murderer was made king, went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and after reproving the Shechemites for their madness and impolicy in one of the best and most ingenious parables ever written, he pronounced the following curse: 'Let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.' 1 This curse of Jotham was not long delayed; it was not put off to a future state; in about three years from the day Abimelech was made king, 'God sent an evil spirit between him and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech; that the cruelty done to the three-score and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem which aided him in the killing of his brethren.'2 This treachery soon kindled the flame of open war, and terminated in the destruction of Shechem and its inhabitants, and in the death of Abimelech. 'Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren. And all the evil of the men of Shechem

did God render upon their heads; and upon them came the curse of Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal.'

According to the doctrine of future retribution, which we now have under consideration, if God had rendered all the iniquity of Abimelech on his head, and all the evil of the men of Shechem upon their heads, they must all have been condemned to endless sufferings, in the hell which that doctrine teaches; but there is not the least intimation that in the retributions of divine justice, which were executed on those vile transgressors, any infliction was extended into the future state. It seems reasonable to ask, in this place, why God should inspire Jotham to anounce the curse which we have seen that God executed on those murderers, and yet withhold from him all knowledge concerning a curse which is infinitely more durable and indescribably more severe, if such were contained in the treasures of divine retribution? The divines of our times, who believe and preach future retribution, confidently threaten people with its terrors, though so far from being such atrocious murderers as were Abimelech and the Shechemites, they have committed no open violation of the wholesome laws of civil society in their lives, and are kind husbands and wives, provident fathers and mothers, dutiful children, loving brothers and sisters, trusty and obliging neighbors and friends. How shall we account for their excessive terrors, under the gracious dispensation of the gospel of man's salvation, which infinitely transcend all the most terrible denunciations of that law which is emphathically stiled the ministration of condemnation?

While passing in review the records of retributive justice, respecting instances wherein God himself is accuser, judge and executioner, we are induced to bestow some particular attention on the fearful case of king Ahab. To the crime we are now about to consider Ahab was but an accessory, Jezebel, his wife, was the principal. The specifications of the case are as follows: 'Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me

that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased, because of the word Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers; and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou not govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry; I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreel-So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in the city dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king: and then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. These iniquitous orders were immediately obeyed by the elders and nobles of Jezreel, who held the favors of Ahab's court in higher esteem than they did that pure and holy justice which forbids false accusation and violence; and Naboth was condemned in a mock trial, under the specious pretence of religious zeal, and cruelly stoned by a lawless mob, that he died. Information was sent to Jezebel that Naboth was dead, when she said to Ahab, 'Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.' Well pleased with these tidings, the king went to take possession of the coveted vineyard. But the righteous judge of all the earth sent his prophet Elijah to meet him on the very spot where he had fondly anticipated the enjoyment of a garden of herbs, and authorised him to announce to the ears of this murderous king the following righteous sentence: 'In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. . . . Because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity. . . . And will make thine house

like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha, the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel spoke the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.' Not far from one year after the murder of Naboth, and the annunciation of the divine judgment against these royal offenders for the crime they had committed, Ahab was mortally wounded in a battle which he fought at Ramoth in Gilead, with the king of Syria. 'So the King died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the King in Sama-And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and they washed his armor according unto the word of the Lord which he spake.' In about thirteen years after the dogs licked the blood of Ahab, according to the word of the Lord, Jezebel was eaten by dogs according to the same sentence; for Jehu conspired against king Joram, the son of Ahab, and slew him, and ordered Jezebel to be thrown from her window into the street, where she was trodden under foot by the horses of Jehu's troops, and eaten by dogs. When it was told Jehu what had become of Jezebel, he said, 'This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel; and the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall say, this is Jezebel.'2

We have here set before the reader a very short account of the wickedness of King Ahab and his wife Jezebel, in relation to the cruel murder of Naboth; but it should be noticed that these two offenders were notoriously wicked in their general conduct, and that the sentence of divine vengeance against them was a judicial retribution for their offences. However hard it may be for our divines of the present day, who advocate the doctrine of a future retribution, and who contend that sin is not fully punished in this world where it is committed, to be told that the divine sentence which we have just noticed, and which was executed on Ahab and his wife Jezebel, was all which the wisdom of God has seen fit to have recorded for our admonition, they will search in vain to find any authority in the Scriptures for their being punished in a future state.

^{1 1} Kings xxii. 37, 38.

² 2 Kings ix. 36, 37.

How widely different was the conduct of the prophet Elijah, who was sent to meet Ahab, and to deliver to him that message from God, which unwavering justice dictated, from the conduct of our divines, who preach the terrors of future retribu-In place of informing the royal murderer that he had exposed his immortal soul to the eternal vengeance of an offended God, and that he was in danger of being cast into a lake of fire and brimstone hereafter, as a just retribution for his wickedness, the legate of heaven in a manner as pointed and severe as it was solemn and awful, told him, 'In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. . . . The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.' As wide as this difference appears, it is fully equalled by that which exists between the terrors of the two doctrines. Let a clergyman, for instance, address a murderer with the terrors of future damnation, and tell him if he does not repent before he dies, he will go to hell hereafter; and, out of civility to the divine, he may treat him with respect, but nothing more; but place this felon at the bar of justice and let him hear his sentence of death pronounced by the judge, and strange terrors will agitate his fragile frame, and deathly paleness will speak the apprehensions of his heart! What men can realize as matter of certainty, can never fail of exerting an influence on the mind which will always correspond with its importance; but mere imaginary terrors, however vivid may be the color in which they are painted, will exert an uncertain and doubtful influence, corresponding with their own uncertainty, while various means of avoiding harm will be sure to neutralize their whole power.

We must not forget to consider the fact that at the time the divine sentence of retribution was announced to Ahab, more than three thousand years had passed away, after the creation of man, and yet it had not seemed good in the sight of God to reveal to his children this sin-preventing, soul-saving doctrine of future punishment! Who will tell us why God should withhold the knowledge of a doctrine from man, which is now thought to be a main pillar in the temple of true religion, and the principal bulwark which defends those moral virtues that constitute the felicities of life? Was not sin as hateful to God, was not righteousness as precious in his sight, was not the salvation of immortal souls as important, in ancient as in modern times? If the future and eternal welfare of man can

be secured only by the terrors of endless misery, why should that kind Creator, who gave to the ancients the same sun, the same moon, as constant seed times and harvest, as to us, have withheld from them these more needful terrors, yet deal them out on us so profusely! Will not millions of poor wretched immortals, doomed to endless sufferings for going out of this world destitute of those preparations, which depend on a belief in the doctrine of future retribution, mingle some faint murmurs, at least, with their groans, that they were not provided with these indispensable means of preparation in their day! If it be said that righteous Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets will tell them that they were prepared for eternal happiness without any knowledge of this doctrine of future retribution, it will amount to a full concession that a belief in this doctrine is not absolutely necessary to such desirable preparation.

As it is contended that God has not seen fit to judge and reward men in this world, according to their works; but has appointed to judge them after death, and to punish them for their wickedness in the future, eternal state, we will, with this opinion, contrast the divine testimony recorded by Ezekiel. 'And thou, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord God concerning the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; even say thou, The sword, the sword is drawn; for the slaughter it is furbished shall I cause it to return into his sheath? I will judge thee in the place where thou was created, in the land of thy nativity. And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee; I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hands of brutish men, and skilful to destroy. Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered; for I the Lord have spoken it.' We have here the divine testimony that God would judge the wicked Ammonites in the place where they were created, that their punishment should be in their land, and should be executed by brutish men, who should be skilful to destroy. The Ammonites were not created in a future state, nor was the land of their nativity in a future state, nor will any one pretend that God will deliver the Ammonites into the hands of brutish

¹ Ezekiel xxi. 28, &c.

men, in a future state, to be there destroyed by them. Yet all this punishment is said to be executed in God's wrath, and in the fire of his indignation. If it was consistent with the moral government of the Ruler of the universe to judge and punish the idolatrous Ammonites in this world, and in their own land, it is difficult to see why it is not equally consistent with this divine government to judge all nations, and every individual of the human family, and to recompense them according

their deserts, in this present state.

After stating, in the foregoing explicit manner, the judgment of the Ammonites, the prophet, in the next chapter, as explicitly states the execution of the divine indignation against God's covenant people; and he lays the scene in the city of Jerusalem. After having set forth, in a long catalogue of specifications, the crimes and abominations of the house of Israel, he thus proceeds; 'And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross; all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin. into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.'1

It is worthy of notice that the prophet is as particular here in stating the place where the house of Israel should suffer the execution of the divine wrath, as he was in stating the place where the Ammonites should suffer it. The Ammonites were to suffer for their iniquities, in their own land; and the house of Israel were to suffer their punishment in Jeru-

salem.

To us an important query here arises: As it is contended by our divines, that all the sufferings which men endure in this world, are nothing in comparison with the punishment

which they are taught to expect in the future state, why are the former so particularly set forth, and the places where they were to be endured designated, so that no mistake can be made; and yet are we not favored with any description of the latter? If in any part of the divine writings we could find as particular a description of a future state of punishment, as we have seen of the punishment of those whom we have passed in review in this inquiry, there would exist no doubt concerning it. But neither Moses nor any of the prophets ever attempted to give any relation concerning this future retribution, which now constitutes one of the principal pillars of religion, and an indispensable article in the christian faith.

In his description of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah compares the punishment of the sin of the daughter of his people with the punishment of the sin of Sodom, and says that the former was greater than the latter. Let the reader carefully consult the following most eloquent description. 'How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter! Even the sea-monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness. tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet, embrace dunghills. For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her. Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire: their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick. They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people. The Lord hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.'1 Although language and the tongue of the most eloquent, would fail in the attempt to set forth the suffering of mortals to a greater degree than is here described, yet there is no intimation, in this description, of punishment in a future state. The prophet assures us that these sufferings were in Jerusalem and in Zion, and that they were the accomplishment of the fierce anger and the fury of the Lord. If we carefully consider the language we have quoted from Ezekiel and Jeremiah, in which they set forth the awful retributions of divine justice, all which they confined to this life and this mortal state, it will at once occur to our recollection that there are no expressions used in any part of the sacred writings, which indicate terrors more fearful, or sufferings more intense.

Should preachers of our times, who profess to believe that the prophets of Israel, whose testimony we have just considered, were inspired by the divine Spirit to announce the retributions of justice against the transgressors of their times, follow their example, and, confining all the punishments which they should hold up to the people, to the present state, exert all their wisdom and discernment to understand the effects of wickedness of all descriptions, and to set them forth in their true colors, they would certainly be a very different kind of preachers from what they now are; and, we believe, a much more profitable kind of preachers. But what would our christian congregations think, should they, in place of hearing from the pulpits the usual and fashionable denunciations of eternal punishment in the invisible world, for the follies and crimes of this life, hear the natural and necessary tendency of every species of wrong doing clearly pointed out, and enforced with all the powers of that eloquence which is employed in the usual way, but not a word about a future state of punishment? Should such a change take place, if violent excitements should be discontinued, if religious fanaticism should cease to produce its frequent paroxysms, and if none were made mad with the fears of everlasting torment, it is confidently believed that vice would be more detested, than it now is; and that virtue would have more sincere admirers.

Notwithstanding this article is already protracted beyond what was at first contemplated, we are unwilling to bring it to a close without noticing how exactly the preaching of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, corresponded with the tes-

timony of the prophets which we have considered.

When the divine teacher denounced the judgments of heaven on the most perverse and abominable people that ever our world produced, the dark, portentous cloud of vengeance, which had been gathering for ages, had then acquired such a density as to hang visibly over the land. He saw the cloud, and wept over Jerusalem, knowing that her fearful destruction drew nigh. Accordingly he limited all his dreadful denunciations to the generation in which he lived. The following are some of his declarations on this subject. 'Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.'1 'Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteeus blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he

¹ Matt. xvi. 24-28.

that cometh in the name of the Lord.'1 'Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.' 2 'For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God.'3 'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But we unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ve see and know of your ownselves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.4 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days,

[:] Matt. xxiii. 32--39.

² Mark viii. 38.—ix. 1. ³ Luke ix. 26, 27,

shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Now learn a parable of the figtree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all

these things be fulfilled.' 1

If Jesus, like modern preachers, had believed that in this state of being, God neither judged nor rewarded men according to their works; but that in a future state he hath appointed a general judgment, and will in eternity punish, with unspeakable severity, those who do wickedly in this world, would he have been so very particular to limit all the denunciations of divine wrath, which he announced to his enemies, to the generation in which he lived? Had Jesus been of the opinion that a belief in this future and eternal retribution, was indispensable to the cause of true piety, religion and morality, would he not have preached as our divines now do, and brought that hell, in which our preachers believe, and which they constantly hold up to the people, directly before the eyes of the multitudes who attended on his preaching? If it be said that Jesus did threaten the wicked with hell fire, we say that we have no proof that he ever used any word by which he meant to express what our preachers mean by the word hell.2

To conclude: It appears, on a careful examination of the subject, that the doctrine of a future state of retribution, must owe its origin to some other source than the holy Scriptures, and to some other wisdom than that which is from above.

H. B

Matt. xxiv. 29—34. ² For a critical examination of this subject, carefully consult the next article.

ART. XXXIV.

Jewish Usage of the Word Gehenna.

The appearance of the Rev Mr Balfour's Inquiry into the import of the words Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, &c. produced at the first a strong sensation, which has not yet subsided, in the public mind. It was felt by all, that the main pillars of the common doctrine of hell had been shaken, and by many, that they had been removed. Different classes of the religious community were, of course, differently affected on the occasion. The dissenters and converts from the popular system, were gratified; its staunch adherents were alarmed. A reply soon appeared, with considerable pomp of preparation, from a Boston clergyman; but it fell dead from the press, and was heard no more of, except through the counter-report of an answer. After an interval, another, from the President of Bowdoin college, followed, and shared the fate of its predecessor. A third, from one of the Professors at Andover, has since taken its way to Sheol. Without arrogating a right to pronounce thus summarily on the merits of the entire controversy, we may venture to say at least so much as this: that no respectable answer can be made to Mr Balfour's work, which will subserve the doctrine of hell torments as held by the common people. Should an opponent even succeed in the final argument. still the acknowledged facts which he must concede at the outset, would break up the popular foundation of the doctrine; and his only expedient then would be, to shift the long settled faith of the people over to new grounds to which they have not been accustomed. A hazardous experiment on an old doctrine! Any direct attempt at such a transfer would endanger the doctrine itself; and its friends are probably aware that if so fundamental a reform once begins, there is no judging how far it will go, nor where it will end.

It is virtually agreed by the chief controvertists on both sides, that the Hebrew Sheol, from which alone the word hell is translated in the Old Testament, and the Greek Hades, from which it is often translated in the New, signify literally the state of the dead, and nothing more. We are indeed told that they may possibly have a secondary meaning; or rather, that it would be difficult absolutely to prove that they may not, to such as are

already believers in future torment. This, however, is, in plain language, a most thorough concession, that no argument can be drawn simply from these terms themselves, in favor of that doctrine, which must first be granted before they can afford it any countenance, and even then only by a possible secondary application. Such is the result, with regard to Sheol and Hades.

It is on the word Gehenna, which occurs twelve times, all in the New Testament, that the principal reliance is placed. This, it is contended, corresponds fairly enough with the term hell in our present usage. But Mr Balfour, on the contrary, points out the derivation of that Jewish word from the valley of Hinnom; and enters on a careful review of all the texts in which it is found, in order to show that the inspired teachers did not employ it in the sense alleged. His opponents reply, that although it orginally denoted the valley of Hinnom, it had lost that signification in our Saviour's time. At this period, they assert, it had become appropriated in the current language of the Jews to the place or state of future torment; and therefore it must have been so understood when used by Christ and his apostles. We need not trace the controversy further, nor even insert the considerations by which Mr Balfour sustains his cause against this argument, since his work is probably in the hands of all our readers. We wish to offer, in the first place, a reflection of our own upon the last mentioned assertion of his opponents; and then to state certain facts that seem important to the subject.

To us it appears that, whatever was the commonly received sense of the word Gehenna among the Jews at the Christian era, in about the same sense must Christ and the writers of the New Testament have expected and have meant to be understood by it; unless they introduced it either with such express cautions, or under such significant circumstances, as would naturally apprize the people of a departure from its cotemporary acceptation. Where no such warning is given, it is certainly the general rule to take words according to the established usage of the time, on what grounds soever that usage may have arisen. This may be illustrated by a case which, for all the purposes in question, is parallel. Our English word hell seems originally and by derivation to have signified only a hidden place; and even no more than three or four centuries ago, it was currently applied to the simple state of the dead.

But such is no longer the case. In religious language, it has since become appropriated, by common custom, to a future state of torment. Now, let any preacher or theological writer of this day use the word in a sense very different, say in its original signification, and he will take care that some corresponding expression or circumstance shall prevent its being applied in the common way; but if, on the contrary, no plain notice of the kind appears, we ought in justice to understand him according to the present and established idea of the term. Whoever speaks of hell in the usual style, is supposed to mean hell in the usual sense. And if Gehenna had actually acquired, no matter on what grounds, the same meaning in our Saviour's day, it is natural so to understand it in his language and in that of the New Testament, unless we clearly discover some circumstances which were then obvious, and which would guard the people against that interpretation. Such is our inference, if we admit the assertion made by Mr Balfour's opponents, and indeed by many standard critics.

But after all, is it a truth that Gehenna had become thus exclusively appropriated by the Jews to a future state of torment, so early as our Saviour's day? This is the question into which we mean to inquire in the present article. And we think that whoever follows us through, will see that the position is at least very doubtful, if it does not rest altogether on conjecture. We shall lay before our readers all the facts, with which we are acquainted, in the case; and these are so many and of such a character as to leave little chance for anything new to alter materially the general result. In order to present the subject in a clear light, it may be well, First, to state the derivation of Gehenna; briefly however, since on this particular the public is already well informed through Mr Balfour's works. Secondly, we shall point out some peculiarities worthy of notice in the form of the word; and Thirdly, trace its usage among the Jews according to all the light antiquity affords, and endeavor to fix the earliest period at which it can, with certainty, be pronounced to have acquired among them the sense alleged.

FIRST. Its Derivation.

Professor Stuart says, 'The word Gehenna is derived, as all agree, from the Hebrew words Gee Hennom; which, in

process of time passing into other languages, assumed divers forms; for example, Chaldee Gehennom, Arabic Gahannam, Greek Gehenna. The valley of Hinnom (Gee Hennom,) is a part, (the eastern section) of the pleasant Wadi or valley, which bounds Jerusalem on the south, Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 6. Here, in ancient times, and under some of the idolatrous kings, the worship of Moloch, the horrid idol-god of the Ammonites, was practised. To this idol children were offered in sacrifice, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Ezek. xxiii. 37, 39. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 2. If we may credit the Rabbins, the head of the idol was like that of an ox; while the rest of its body resembled that of a man. It was hollow within; and being heated by fire, children were laid in its arms and were there literally roasted alive. We cannot wonder then at the severe terms in which the worship of Moloch is everywhere denounced in the Scriptures. Nor can we wonder that the place itself should have been called Tophet, that is, abomination, detestation, (from Toph, to vomit with loathing.) Jer. xxxi. 32; xix. 6. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Ezek. xxiii. 37, 39. After these sacrifices had ceased, the place was desecrated and made one of loathing and horror. The pious king Josiah caused it to be polluted, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; that is, he caused to be carried there the filth of the city of Jerusalem. It would seem that the custom of desecrating this place, thus happily begun, was continued in after ages down to the period when our Saviour was on earth. Perpetual fires were kept up, in order to consume the offal which was deposited there. And as the same offal would breed worms, (for so all putrefying meat of course does,) hence came the expresssion, Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. It is admitted that the Jews of later date used the word Gehenna to denote Tartarus, that is, the place of infernal punishment. The question here to be discussed, is, whether this name is literally employed in the New Testament,' &c. &c. Thus far the professor.

A still higher authority, perhaps as high as can be adduced in such a case, is Schleusner, the celebrated German author of the Lexicon on the New Testament. He says, 'Gehenna, originally a Hebrew word, which signifies the valley of Hinnom,

¹ Exegetical Essays on several words relating to Future Punishment. pp. 140, 141.

is composed of the common noun Gee (valley,) and the proper name Hinnom, the owner of this valley. The valley of the sons of Hinnom was a delightful vale, planted with trees, watered by fountains, and lying near Jerusalem on the southeast by the torrent Kedron. Here the Jews placed that brazen image of Moloch, which had the face of a calf, and extended its hands as those of a man. It is said, on the authority of the ancient Rabbins, that, to this image, the idolatrous Jews were wont not only to sacrifice doves, pigeons, lambs, rams, calves and bulls, but even to offer their children. (Consult also 1 Kings xi. 7. 2 Kings xv. 3, 4.) In the prophecy of Jeremiah, (vii. 31,) this valley is called Tophet, from Toph, a drum; because the administrators in these horrible rites. beat drums, lest the cries and shrieks of the infants who were burned, should be heard by the assembly. At length, these nefarious practices were abolished by Josiah, and the Jews brought back to the pure worship of God. (2 Kings xxiii. 10.) After this, they held the place in such abomination, it is said, that they cast into it all kinds of filth, together with the carcasses of beasts, and the unburied bodies of criminals who had been executed. Continual fires were necessary, in order to consume these, lest the putrefaction should infect the air; and there were always worms feeding on the remaining relics. Hence it came, that any severe punishment, especially a shameful kind of death, was denominated Gehenna; and that likewise hell itself, the miserable state in which the wicked after death are to suffer extreme and perpetual torment with the demons, was called by the same name, not only by the Jews,' &c. &c.1 Schleusner finishes the sentence by adding, 'but also by Christ and his apostles;' an assertion for which he brings no other support than the controverted usage of the word in the New Testament.

Such, then, is the undisputed derivation of the term Gehenna. Our readers may find concurring statements by other critics, in Mr Balfour's Inquiry, ch. 1, § 1, and ch. ii, § 1.

We proceed to point out,

SECONDLY, The Peculiarity in the form of the Word.

By the foregoing and other similar statements concerning its derivation, one might be left to suppose that Gehenna was, at

¹ Schleusneri Lexicon in Nov. Test. sub voce Fierva.

first, the usual, the current, Greek name of the valley of Hinnom. This, however, does not appear to have been the fact. Though put into a Greek form, and written in Greek letters, and though introduced into that language, it was no Greek word; but a modification, as anybody may see, of the two Hebrew words, Gee Hennom, contracted into one. This phrase, in Hebrew, is, literally, the valley of Hinnom: thus Gee, the vallev; Hennom, of Hinnom. And so this place is always written in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament; except when it is called Gee Ben Hennom, the valley of the son of Hinnom, and when it is denominated Tophet. Now, when the Jews meant to give the proper name of the valley of Hinnom, in Greek, they did not generally adopt the word Gehenna, but used another form of expression. Instead of retaining the original Hebrew words thus contracted into a single term, they translated them into Greek, as we do into English. Pharangx, in Greek answers to the Hebrew Gee, signifying valley; and accordingly they said, Pharangx Hennom, literally, the valley of Hinnoin; or, Pharangx whiou Hennom, that is, the valley of the son of Hinnom. Poluandrion also in Greek, has a sufficient relation to the Hebrew Gee, since it means a large cemetery, which was of course made deep; and accordingly they sometimes used this word instead of Pharangx. Such are the expressions by which we find the Jews commonly to have translated the corresponding Hebrew phrases, in their Greek version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint; and since this was begun and finished by different hands and at different periods, during the two or three centuries before the Christian era, we may adduce it as proof of Jewish usages in those times. On this authority, therefore, we repeat, that when the Jews meant to express the proper name of the valley of Hinnom, in Greek, they commonly translated the phrase into that language, instead of simply combining the original Hebrew words. Still, we must observe that this was not invariably the case. In one solitary text, the Septuagint uses Gehenna itself for that purpose, though with a casual variation of the spelling: See Josh. xviii. 16, where we read that the border of the tribe of Benjamin 'descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of Jebusi on the south,' &c. Here, and here only, the Septuagint has the very word in question, spelt Gaihenna: a slight difference in orthography, by no means uncommon in writing Hebrew words with Greek letters.

In two other passages we find a like combination of the Hebrew words, to express the longer phrase, the valley of the son of Hinnom. King Ahaz is said, (2 Chron. xxviii, 3,) to have ' burned incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom;" and king Manasseh afterwards, (xxxiii, 6,) to have 'caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. In both of these instances, the Septuagint represents the phrase marked in italics, by the untranslated compound, Gebenhennom,1 which is a mere transcript in Greek letters of the Hebrew words in the original text, Gee Ben Hennom; the Hebrew Ben signifying son. From these cases we should infer, that although the Jews generally translated the expression, when they had occasion to speak or write, in the Greek language, the name of the valley of Hinnom, still it was not altogether unusual with them to retain the old Hebrew phrase, with more or less modification; as in the example of Gehenna or Gaihenna, for the valley of Hinnom, and Gebenhennom, for the valley of the son of Hinnom. We now turn to another train of facts.

At the time of our Saviour, the vernacular tongue of the Jews in Palestine, is supposed to have been neither the ancient Hebrew, if so we call the language of the Old Testament, nor the Greek; but a mixture, consisting partly of Syriac and mostly of Chaldee, together with some corruptions from other sources. It may, therefore, be well to point out, as far as practicable, the peculiar form of the word corresponding to Gehenna, in this mixed tongue, in which Christ must have spoken when he used the term. We say, as far as practicable; because, we are obliged to depend for this purpose, on the Chaldee alone; which, however, approaches nearly enough to the dialect in question to answer general uses. There are extant several Chaldee translations, or rather paraphrases, of parts of the Old Testament, made by Jews and called Targums; of which our readers may find an account in Mr Balfour's Inquiry. The two oldest are thought by some to have been written just before the New Testament; but by others, two or thee centuries after. In one of these, that of Jonathan

In printed copies of the Septuagint, the editors have divided this compound into two words, ge Benhennom, and accented the former, to make it seem the Greek enclitic of that form. But it is manifestly the Hebrew Gee, spelt, as is Ben, in Greek letters. It might be divided into three terms, ge ben hennom; still, the words would be pure Hebrew, with nothing of Greek, except the characters.

Ben Uzziel, we first meet with the Chaldee word for Gehenna; and here we find it, so far as we have examined, always distinguished from the name of the valley of Hinnom, both in form and in meaning. When the author comes in the course of his version, to a text in which the original Hebrew mentions the valley of Hinnom, he translates the phrase into Chaldee, thus, Heeleth Hennom; the Chaldee Heeleth answering to the Hebrew Gee, and signifying valley. Or, if the valley of the son of Hinnom, be the original expression, Jonathan renders it, Heeleth Bar Hennom; the Chaldee Bar answering to the Hebrew Ben, and signifying son. Such are the forms in which he invariably, we think, writes the name of this place, whenever he has occasion to use it; which is only in translating those passages in which it is thus mentioned in the Hebrew text, and likewise in our English version. On the other hand, it is only when he takes the license of a paraphrast, either to amplify on the expressions of the original according to his own views, or to insert his own notions at large and without restraint, that he introduces the word Gehenna. This he writes Gehennom, and Geehennom: a mere contraction or compound of the old Hebrew name of the valley of Hinnom, retained untranslated in the Chaldee; in which it could, therefore, have no significancy, except from common usage. 1 And in Jonathan's Targum, it is, we think, always used to denote a place or state of divine punishment, not such merely as is inflicted by human laws, and perhaps a place of future torment.

¹ To accommodate some of our readers, we insert—and to perplex none, we place in a note once for all—the several original expressions we have had occasion to employ, giving their genuine forms in the characters of the different languages to which they respectively belong.

^{1.} Hebrew, (Old Testament): ג' הוב אין, the valley of Hinnom, Josh. xv. 8. xviii. 16, &c.—ג' ב'ן הוב אין, or, ב'ן הוב אין, the valley of the son of Hinnom, Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16. 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31, 32, &c. &c.

^{2.} Chaldee, (Jonathan Ben Uzziel's Targum): חילת הנו אולת הנום, or, חילת הנום, or, חילת בר הנם, or, חילת בר הנם, or, חילת בר הנום, the valley of the son of Hinnom, Josh. xv. 8; xviii. 16. 2 Kings xxiii. 10, &c. &c.—הוו, or, הוום, Gehenna, 1 Sam. ii. 9, 10. Isa. xxvi. 16; lxvi. 24, &c. &c.

^{3.} Greek, (Septuagint): φώραγξ 'Εννόμ, the valley of Hinnom, Josh. xv. 8.—φώραγξ 'εννόμ, or, πολυάνδριον 'υιοῦ 'Εννόμ, the valley of the son of Hinnom, 2 Kings xxiii. 10. Jer. xix. 6, &c. &c.—γαίεννα, the valley of Hinnom, Josh. xviii. 16.—γὲ Βενεννόμ, (rather, γεβενεννόμ, see the preceding note,) the valley of the son of Hinnom, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6.

It would seem that when both of the trains of facts, stated under this our second head, are taken together, they go to countenance the following opinion: that between the age of the Septuagint and that of Jonathan Ben Uzziel's Targum, the word Gehenna had ceased to denote, as formerly, the valley of Hinnom; and that it had become currently appropriated to the idea of future punishment, or at least, of signal punishment inflicted by the divine agency. This important change of its application, belongs, however, to our next general head, under which we shall trace, as fully as we can.

THIRDLY, The History of its Usage among the Jews.

Through all the times of the Old Testament, which descended within four centuries of the Christian era, it is plain that Gee Hennom (such was then the form of the expression,) had, among the people, no other than its literal application. Of this long period we, therefore, take our leave. It is likewise plain that, during the much later age in which the Septuagint was written, Gehenna denoted, at least among the Jews of Egypt where this version was made, simply the valley of Hinnom: that particular spot to which the border of the tribe of Benjamin descended on the south side of Jebusi, or Jerusa-Iem. So the word is used in the only case of its occurrence, as we have seen; so, another word, formed on the same principle, is likewise used in two other passages; and none of this class of terms is ever introduced in any different sense. Thus far we proceed on sure ground. To how late a period do these facts conduct us, in our progress towards the times of the New Testament?

The Septuagint was begun about two hundred and seventy or two hundred and eighty years before Christ, when the five books of Moses, called the law, were translated. But the version of the other books, in which we find the usage just mentioned, was not undertaken, it is generally supposed, till within one hundred and seventy years of our Saviour's birth. Even then, the work does not seem to have advanced very speedily to its completion; for although we have no positive facts to determine the question, it would appear, from the evident marks of different hands, and from the great diversity of style, that the several books were translated at various times, without much regard to the order of the canon, and by such as engaged in the task only when occasion required or

inclination induced.1 On the decisive authority of the Septuagint, then, we may conclude that, two hundred years at most, and perhaps but a hundred and fifty, before the date of the New Testament, Gehenna retained its etymological signification, among the Jews of Egypt; and probably likewise among all those that spoke the Greek language, since they generally used this version, and adopted its phraseology. It should now be observed, that these conclusions have an important bearing on the Jewish usage in Palestine: It is well known to such as have examined the matter, that in the gradual corruption of the Old Testament religion by the admixture of heathen philosophy, and in the corresponding change of the ancient forms of expression to a new meaning, the Jews of Egypt appear to have taken the lead, and to have been considerably before those of Judea.² We cannot suppose, therefore, that Gehenna had acquired, in Palestine, an entirely new and far-fetched application, so long as we find it, in Egypt, still unchanged from its original and simple import. The preceding facts afford all the direct light that can be obtained on its usage at this time; since no other Jewish works have descended to us from the age of the Septuagint, except some of the older books of the Apocrypha; and these are wholly silent on our subject. We shall, however, make some use of them, in our next period.

We now proceed to the important interval between the completion of the Septuagint and our Saviour's public ministry. Here, the only Jewish remains are, probably, some of the later books of the Apocrypha, and the writings of Philo Judæus. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel, which used to be placed towards the end of this period, are now generally referred, by the critics, to a much later date. We are, therefore, left to depend on the before named authorities alone, for our present research. But in no passage of the Apocrypha, either in the earlier or in the latter books, does Gehenna occur; nor, we think, in the works of Philo

¹ Prideaux's Connections, vol. iii. pp. 356, 357. Charlestown, 1815. Horne's Introduction, vol. ii. pp. 168, 169. Phila. 1827.

² Bruckeri Hist. Crit. Philosophiæ, Tom. ii. pp. 660, 661, 690. The apocryphal book of Wisdom, a forgery of some Egyptian Jew, is palpably distinguished, by its philosophical notions, from the rest of the Apocrypha; and the philosophising genius of Philo far outstripped all who had gone before him, and nearly matched that of the Talmudists in after ages.

³ Balfour's Inquiry, pp. 273, 274. Charlestown, 1824.

Judæus; so that all positive and direct evidence is out of the question, If we misjudge not, however, both the Apocrypha, when compared together, and the works of Philo, afford circumstantial evidence that the word cannot have been currently employed, during their age, to denote a place of future tor-And in the absence of every other kind of testimony, it may be well to furnish our readers with these indications, which, though not decisive, will serve at least to show what is

the general appearance of the case.

1. All the older books of the Apocrypha, as we have just intimated, and even some of the later, are wholly silent with regard to a future state of existence. The rewards of virtue and the punishment of sin, they place expressly in the experience of this life, in the reputation that one leaves behind, and in the prosperous or adverse fortune of his descendants. And here the writers drop the subject; notwithstanding they had frequent occasions to carry it forward into another life, if such were the tenor of their views.1 Of all the Apocryphal books, except the second of Esdras which has been forged by some Christian since the time of the New Testament, there are but two, the Wisdom of Solomon and the Second of Maccabees. which contain allusions to another world of retribution;² and these were composed, the latter at some time during the 150 years before Christ, and the former, perhaps still later, near the Christian era.3 These circumstances, when taken together and compared with the manifest doctrine of the Jews in the time of the Old Testament, seem to favor the conjecture that the idea of future punishment did not appear among them till about 150 or 200 years before Christ: when it began, per-

1 On the subject of rewards and punishments, see Tobit iii. 10. iv. 5-9. xii. 8-10; xiv. 9-11. Ecclus. passim, particularly xxxix. 9-11, 25-31; xl. 1-14. Baruch iii. 13, 14; iv. 1. I Macc. ii. 50-64; vi. 44.—On the state of the dead, Tobit iii. 6. Ecclus. xiv. 15-19; xvii. 27-30; xxii. 11, 12; xxxviii. 16-23; xli. 1-4. Baruch ii. 17, 18.

A solitary expression in the book of Judith also, (ch. xvi. 17,) is sometimes quoted as referring to future torment. But such an application is not

Introduction.

A solitary expression in the book of Judith also, (ch. xvi. 17,) is sometimes quoted as referring to future torment. But such an application is not necessary in itself, nor is it countenanced by any thing else in the book; and it makes an abrupt break in the context. Whoever compares the following passages, will see at once that the phrases quoted are currently used by the Apocryphal writers, with reference only to natural death and the judgments of this life: Apocryphal Esther i. 11. Judith viii. 27. Ecclus. vii. 16, 17; x. 11; xvi. 6—8; xix. 3; xxi. 9; xxiii. 16; xxviii. 23; xxxvi. 9. Baruch iv. 35.

3 As to the dates of the several books of the Apocrypha, which are very uncertain, we have been guided by Prideaux's Connections, and Horne's Introduction.

haps to arise among the Pharisees, who had lately separated from the Sadducees.

- 2. When we come to the second book of Maccabees, the Wisdom of Solomon, and lastly to the works of Philo, which were written about the time of our Saviour's ministry, we find them referring to the unhappy state of the wicked after death. Now, had Gehenna become the current name of that state, it seems likely that, in some of these cases, it would have been introduced, from the force of habit, or for convenience. We lay, indeed, no great stress on its entire omission, nor on the circumlocutions to which the two latter authors were obliged sometimes to resort, for want of an appropriate term; yet these circumstances show in what direction the natural course of inference bears.
- 3. From the peculiar relation, and subsequent usage, of the word, it will be admitted, by all critics, that whensoever Gehenna did become appropriated to a place or state of future torment, it was meant to designate it as an abode of fire, a condition characterized by fire; so that the recieved notion of future misery must, at that time, have been habitually associated with the idea of fire, as it has been in modern ages. Let it, then, be carefully observed, that during the period now under review, the crude notions which spread among the Jews concerning future misery, seem to have been altogether unconnected with the idea of fire, either as a reality or as a figure. The second book of Maccabees, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the works of Philo, the only sources of information, never describe the condition of the wicked after death, by any metaphor of the kind. On the contrary they represent it in another light. According to the first, the pious Jews, who suffered martrydom or fell in battle, believed that God would, in due time, restore their souls from the realms of death to their former bodies: 1 whether on this earth or in some other region, does not appear. Those, too, who died in defence of the law, though otherwise sinful and even rebellious, might expect the same favor, should an atonement be offered for their sins, by the survivors.2 But while the faithful entertained such confidence for themselves, one of them is represented in his last moments as threatening the heathen tyrant, their ruthless persecutor, that he would 'have no resurrection to life.'3

¹ 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36; xiv. 46.
² Ditto. xii. 40—45.
³ Ditto. vii. 14.

soul, after his decease, would be left forever in the place of the dead: a dark and undesirable abode, according to the opinion of the ancients, an obscure region, in which perpetual confinement must have presented a dreadful idea to the living. Such are the views we gather from the second book of Maccabees. In the Wisdom of Solomon, a Jewish production from the Alexandrian hotbed of Platonism, we meet with a doctrine somewhat different. Here, no return of departed spirits, nor reunion with their bodies, is intimated. The souls of the righteous, the author represents, enter at death on a state of peace, hope and honor; and are entrusted with some kind of dominion over the living. But those of the wicked go into a darkness, of which that once brought upon Egypt was but an image. They are in tribulation, and are accounted a reproach among the dead. At a certain time, which the author calls the visitation of souls, the just will be conducted to a glorious palace and receive a beautiful crown; but the unjust shall give in the account of their sins with fear, and behold with surprise and hopeless regret the deliverance of the godly whom they had contemned in this world. The whole creation shall fight against them. Thunderbolts and hailstones shall be discharged upon them from on high; the sea shall rage against them; and a mighty wind shall blow them away.1 It should be remembered that these more highly colored representations are given by an Egyptian Jew; and not by an inhabitant of Palestine. Nearly the same are the ideas of Philo, another Egyptian Jew; if indeed he be not, as many account him, the identical author of the Wisdom of Solomon. Though born before the Christian era, he lived several years after our Lord's crucifixion. In the works which bear his name, the immorality of the soul is clearly taught, together with the future happiness of the righteous, and misery of the wicked. The place of the impious, hereafter, he describes as 'a dark region which is covered with profound night and perpetual blackness,' where they live in an eternal death.2 But, we think, he never represents it as a scene of fire, nor even

Wisdom of Solomon iii. 1—8; iv. 16—20; v. 1—23; xvii. 21.

Philonis J. Opera, Tom. i. pp. 223, 676, Edit. Mangey. Of Philo's works, we have at hand only a small collection of extracts, begun some time since, but interrupted. If we err in presuming that he never connects the idea of fire with that of future punishment, we claim the privilege of correction.

alludes to it by that glaring metaphor, which has always been the first and the favorite one, wherever the notion of a burning hell prevailed. From the few traces, therefore, which remain to us of this age, and which have now been presented, it seems that the idea of future punishment, such as it was among the Jews, was associated with that of darkness, and not of fire; and we shall have occasion to see that among those of Palestine, the misery of the wicked was supposed to consist rather in privation than in positive infliction. To denote such views it is hardly credible that they can have employed that 'Gehenna of fire, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'

The works of Philo bring us to the times of the New Testament. Thus far, we have seen, there is no indication that Gehenna had become appropriated to a place of future torment. On the contrary, all the circumstances which relate to the question, have an opposite bearing. Here we might drop the inquiry, were it not for two considerations: It will perhaps be more satisfactory to follow the subject onwards, till we arrive at the first clear proof of the change which we seek in the usage of the word; and by thus proceeding, we shall meet with facts corroborating some of the more important of the foregoing positions. Passing the New Testament, which falls without the line of this investigation, we go on to the next Jewish remains.

These are the works of the renowned Josephus: a moderate Pharisee, and one of the most learned and accomplished Jews that Palestine could boast. It is well known that he has left several professed and formal statements of the opinions of his countrymen, besides introducing them incidentally in the course of his history; and since all his writings bear date between A. D. 70, and A. D. 100, his representations may be regarded as applicable to the very times of the New Testament. He says that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and of future rewards and punishments, was maintained by the Pharisees and Essenes, and rejected by the Sadducees. But before we proceed to the particulars in his account, one or two circumstances deserve a separate mention: 1. Either by accident or by design, he never intimates that this doctrine existed among the Jews, till the days of Herod the Great, immediately pre-

ceding those of our Saviour; 1 notwithstanding he gives their history at large, from the time of Abraham. 2. The word Gehenna occurs neither in those passages in which he speaks of the state of the wicked after death, nor in any other part of his works. From this omission, however, no argument can be drawn; since he sought to avoid the Hebraisms and peculiar phrases of the Jews, and to attain the classic purity of the Greek and Roman style. Our only resource, now, is to bring forward his representation of the views entertained in Palestine, concerning future retribution, in order to see whether they were of such a character as even to admit the

application of the term Gehenna.

The Pharisees, who were the prevailing sect, held the place both of rewards and punishments for departed souls, to be under the earth. Here they are treated accordingly as they have been virtuous or vicious in the present world. The good are happy; and in the revolution of ages, they will be permitted to live again, by entering into other bodies. But this desiraable privilege is not allowed to the wicked, who are punished eternally, and forever confined to the place of the dead, as in a prison. The souls of the most abominable, such as commit suicide, are treated with the greatest severity of all, and are accordingly sent to the very darkest part of this subterranean abode. Such were the popular views. The Essenes, who may be called the monks of Judaism, were only four thousand in number; and living chiefly in deserts, they were so obscure a sect that they never appear in the history of the New Testament. On the subject in question, they differed little from the Pharisees, except that they seem to have held no reunion of souls, good or bad, with their bodies, and that they perhaps attributed a greater degree of suffering to the state of the wicked. But we cannot discover, in Josephus, that either of these sects supposed it to be a state of fire, or that the Jews ever alluded to it by that emblem. 2 In addition, therefore, to the

The earliest traces of this doctrine, in his works, are in Jewish War Book i. ch. 33, 2, and Antiq. B. xviii. ch. 1, 3.

2 See Antiq. B. xviii. 1, 3; Jewish War B. i. 33, 2; B. ii. 8, 10—14; B. iii. 8, 5; B. vii. 8, 7, and Against Apion, B. ii. 31, which are the only places in which Josephus introduces or alludes to the future state. The piece entitled 'Discourse concerning Hades,' at the end of Whiston's edition, is now universally considered the work of some Christian writer of, perhaps, the second or third century; and the account 'Of the martyrdom of the Maccabees,' which is found in some other editions of Josephus, is supposed to have been written by some Christian.

absence of all proof that they had as yet named it Gehenna, we find their notions of it to have been such as would not comport with that term in its later usage.

From the time of Josephus onwards, there is an interval of about a century, from which no Jewish writings have descended to us. It was a period of dreadful change and ruin with that distracted people. Their body politic was dissolved; the whole system of their ceremonial religion had been crushed in the fall of their city and temple; and they themselves, scattered abroad, were accursed on all the face of the earth. In these circumstances, it was natural that their sentiments and usages should undergo a rapid modification; and if we may judge from the state in which we find their doctrine when their own compositions again appear in view, they adopted almost every conceit, provided it were sufficiently extravagant and

ridiculous, that ever crossed the brain of a madman.

In this period, we meet with the first information which we receive from any quarter whatsoever, that Gehenna was the place of the damned. Still, it is not from a Jew, that this earliest notice comes, but from the celebrated Christian father, Justin Martyr, about A. D. 150. He quotes the language of our Saviour, 'fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna,' and then adds, for the instruction of the heathens to whom he was writing, that 'Gehenna is the place where those are to be punished who have led unrighteous lives, and disbelieved what God declared by Christ.' 1 This is, of course, merely his interpretation of that term, as he understood it in the New Testament; and notwithstanding he had been brought up in one of the cities of the ancient Samaria, he certainly had no acquaintance with the language, and probably none with the peculiar usages, of the Jews.

The next notice of the kind, is, we think, that of another Christian father, Clemens Alexandrinus, about A. D. 195. Maintaining the doctrine of a future state, he adduces the authority of the heathen philosophers: 'Does not Plato acknowledge both the rivers of fire, and that profound depth of the earth which the barbarians [the Jews,] call Gehenna? Does

¹ Apol. Prim. c. xix. p. 55. Paris, 1742.

he not prophetically mention Tartarus, Cocytus, Acheron, the Phlegethon of fire, and certain other like places of punishment, which lead to correction and discipline?' Here Clemens meant, beyond all doubt, that the Jews denominated the place of future punishment, Gehenna; but whether he spoke from personal knowledge or from presumption, is altogether uncertain. He knew it to be a Jewish, not a Greek, word; and he may have judged its usage among the barbarians, as he called them, by what he supposed its sense in the new Testament.

We come, at last, to the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel; and in the latter of these, we meet, for the first time in Jewish writings, with Gehenna in the sense alleged. In the former, so far at least as the end of the paraphrase on Genesis, neither that term nor any thing else relating to our subject, occurs; and we presume that such is the case with the rest of the work, since it is nearly a literal translation, and is never quoted, by the critics, for examples in point. But in the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, Gehenna is several times used; and here, as we have already observed, it seems appropriated exclusively to scenes either of future woe, or of severe and extensive judgments in this world: perhaps, always to the The author speaks of Gehenna, as the place which God 'hath prepared below for transgressors;' to which he 'will adjudge them in the day of trial;' and 'from which he will preserve his righteous servants.' When he redeems the captivity of his poople, 'he will appear in his power, in order to cast all the impious into Gehenna.' It is 'prepared, of old, for the nations that have oppressed Israel: the king eternal hath prepared it deep and wide; a flaming pile is kindled therein, as of much wood; and the word of the Lord as a torrent of sulphur sets it on fire.' The dissemblers, in their terror, exclaim, 'Who among us shall dwell in Jerusalem, where the impious are to be judged and sent into Gehenna with eternal burning.' 'The blessed shall see them descending into the land of Gehenna,' Such as say, 'stand by thyself, come not near unto me, for I am holier than thou, -shall have their punishment in Gehenna, where the fire burns continually; and their bodies shall be delivered to the second death.' When all people shall come 'from month to month,

¹ Strom. Lib. v. c. 14, p. 700. Edit. Potter.

and from sabbath to sabbath, to worship before the Lord, they shall go forth and behold the carcasses of the sinners who have despised the word of the Lord; their souls die not, and their fire is not quenched; and they shall be judged in Gehenna, until the righteous shall say of them, We have seen enough.' &c. 1 Such is the language in which this author speaks of Gehenna. And we may repeat, that it is not only in a different style, but under a different name, that he mentions the valley of Hinnom. At the date of this Targum, therefore, we may conclude that the term had become appropriated by the Jews to a place of future torment. Nothing remains, but to point

out the age of the work.

This is uncertain. Prideaux, together with several of the old critics, and even Gesenius among the living, place it not far from the Christian era, on the authority chiefly of Jewish traditions. Prideaux, however, has well observed, that 'in historical matters, it is not to be regarded what the Jews write, or what they omit.' Most of the eminent critics now agree that it could not have been completed till some time between two and four hundred years after Christ. Dr Jahn thinks it 'a collection of the interpretations of several learned men, made towards the end of the third century, and containing some of a much older date.' Eichhorn says that 'Jonathan certainly lived later than the birth of Christ;' and judging from his style, his fables, his perversions of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and from the profound silence of the early Jews and Christian fathers, he concludes that his compilation cannot have been made before the fourth century. same circumstances that Eichhorn adduces, are thought by Bertholdt to indicate the second or third century; and he is confident that the collection 'cannot have attained its complete form, before the end of the second century.' With these general conclusions, it is said that Bauer likewise agrees; and some critics have referred the work to as late a period as the seventh or eighth century.2

Targum Jonathan (in Walton's Polyglott,) in 1 Sam. ii. 6—10. Isa. xxvi. 14—16, 19; xxx. 31—33; xxxiii. 14, 17; liii. 9; lxv. 5, 6; lxvi. 24. Jer. xvii. 13. N. B. Jonathan has no Targum on the five books of Moses; though there is one, falsely attributed to him, which is sometimes quoted for examples of the word Gehenna.

Prideaux's Connections, Vol. iv. pp. 215–220; Vol. ii. p. 130. Gesenius Jesaia, Einleit. § 11. Jahn's Introduction to the Old Testament, Gen. Introd. § 47, p. 66. New York, 1827. Eichhorn's Einleit. in das alte Test. Kap. iii. § 226, 227. Bertholdt's historische Einleit. in Schriften des alt. und neu. Test. Zweyter Th. § 173. Horne's Introduction, Vol. ii. p. 160.

ART. XXXV.

Interpretations, affecting the credibility of the Scriptures.

It is by no means astonishing, that many parts of the sacred writings, in the English version, have lost much of their original vigor and beauty. Were we sure that all the manuscripts had been well preserved, or faithfully copied, and that they were correct before us, still it is impossible by any artificial translation to express the peculiar power and import of every passage. We say artificial; for we believe all our translations are so. Too much dependence has been placed upon mere philological rules and the mechanical definitions of Lexicons. Prof. Norton of Cambridge, an eminent Greek critic, we understand is engaged in making a translation of the New Testament, in which the spirit, rather than the letter of the word, is to be primarily consulted. The public, we think, may derive essential advantage from the fruits of his labors. But when we consider for how many centuries the sacred writings remained in manuscript, passing through the hands of perhaps corrupt and designing men, the wonder is, that there are not more and grosser errors in the received text than do exist. It is cause of gratitude to heaven, that the Scriptures have been so well preserved.

But necessity compels us to take things as we find them. The truth is, the Scriptures, as they are presented to us in the current English dress, have lost much of their ancient intelligibility and power, and, in some respects, 'are hard to be understood.' We are obliged, therefore, to resort to interpretations. We speak not now of those passages which are involved in the most obscurity, and which none can pretend to understand with any great claims to positive accuracy. We speak, rather, of passages more explicit; but which are still so expressed as to leave some room to conjecture and speculation. On such passages we must exert our reason-carnal and dangerous as some are pleased to consider it; we must compare them with other scriptures, and avail ourselves of such other auxiliary helps as are accessible to us. The conclusions to which we may thus arrive, we call interpretations. We use this word as a convenient one, not caring to vouch

for its full propriety.

It is not to be denied, that the Scriptures have been so interpreted as to weaken their claims to the confidence and respect of mankind. They have, indeed, been made to teach doctrines which are expressly censured on the very face of the sacred text. For instance: No maxim is more prominent in the New Testament—one the spirit of which is diffused throughout the whole record—than that Christianity was given to save, not to destroy, men's lives. Its author reproved every attempt at violence and bloodshed on the part of his followers. He would have his religion propagated, not by the sword, but by the simple and yet mighty power of truth over the minds of an intelligent world. And yet Urban and the Council of Clermont could very readily so interpret certain passages in the two Testaments, as not only to authorize, but expressly to require a crusade to Palestine, to murder the Saracens and rescue the Holy Land and its sacred relics from longer profanation. This is but a single, though a tremendous and bloody, case in point. All history, and even our own observation, will show how Christianity has been perverted, abused and injured by the conjectures, speculations and interpretations in which its ignorant and misguided friends have indulged.

The manner in which many parts of Scripture are explained at the present day, has given an immense advantage to scoffers and unbelievers. The fact is not to be concealed or disguised, that the greatest objections ever conceived and urged against Christianity as a system, have been predicated on the irrational and contradictory dogmas of the Church. These have been taken for granted to be, what their friends have imperiously claimed for them, the genuine doctrines of the gospel. Being so taken, the objections of infidels, we must say, have been weighty; and they have produced an extensive distrust of the truth of the sacred writings. Volney has said, that, at the time of Christ's advent, the expectation amongst the better informed Jews was, that the Messiah, when he came, would effect a salvation for all the world. Jesus, on the contrary, taught a partial salvation—so it is now contended. He came preaching eternal damnation for a majority of mankind. The inference of that sceptic was a natural one, viz.—that Christ was not the true Messiah whom the prophets of Judea had foretold. His mission, it is added, was at war with the promise of his coming, and at variance with his professed philanthropy and universal benevolence. Now Volney took the current dogmas of the Church, and the popular interpretations of the New Testament, as the sound doctrines, as the true interpretation. Hence he found a serious objection to the divinity of Christ and to the truth of his system.

But it was not our design to indict a labored article on the general subject of objections to the Christian faith. Our object more particularly, in this place, is to say, that the most of those objections must be deemed valid as long as what is now commonly called orthodoxy, is taken as a correct summary of the Christian system. If ever the main objections of unbelievers are silenced, we are persuaded that the work must be done by Universalists, or by others assuming the grounds of Universalist interpretations. No system is so friendly to the authority of divine revelation as theirs. After all the abuse that has been heaped upon them, as errorists, heretics and semiinfidels, the credit of so interpreting the sacred writings as to preserve their harmony and consistency, must belong to the Universalists. If their interpretations are rejected, it will be impossible to commend the Scriptures to the favor of candid and inquiring minds. The more learned and sagacious opponents of this faith, are not ignorant of the fact, as we shall soon show.

If the popular notion of 'a day of judgment' be correct, that is, if the opinion is actually sustained by the passages which are always appealed to in proof of the point, we confess we do not see how the claims of Christ as a prophet can be well sustained. We never read the 24th and 25th chapters of St Matthew's Gospel without saying to ourselves-destroy the views of Universalists concerning the predictions here recorded, and you destroy the strongest evidence of the truth of Christianity. Let it be agreed, that the events there described have not yet taken place, and it is as true as that Jesus spoke, that 'his words have passed away' without being fulfilled. It cannot have escaped the notice of any candid and unprejudiced reader of the New Testament, that the event spoken of in several passages, which has generally been supposed to relate to a day of judgment, was expected by Jesus Christ, his apostles and the primitive believers, to take place during that generation. Some, it is true, have attempted to show to the contrary, but their labor has been but an attempt. Grotius, Locke and others have frankly declared, that the apostles themselves believed that the end of the world was to happen in their time,

and that they have declared this to be their belief in several passages of their epistles. Now to say that by the end of the world they understood what modern Christians believe, we cannot escape the fact that they were deceived and in error; and if they were deceived and in error on this all-important point, what assurance can we have that they were not also deceived and erroneous on other points? Nothing but the views of Universalists on this subject, which we believe are assuredly the true ones, can save them against this disastrous and fatal inference. In other words, let the doctrine of a day of judgment in a future world, so far as this doctrine depends for its support on the passages alluded to, be admitted, and you effectually remove the chief prop from the temple of Christianity.

We have said that sensible men amongst our opponents have discovered this important fact. Our proof of this statement we give below, from Dr Macknight,—an orthodox Calvinist,—whose observations Dr Clarke has admitted with approbation, as the best manner of sustaining Christianity against the objection referred to. It will be seen, that he has been obliged to give up those passages as containing no proof of the doctrine of 'a day of judgment,' and to contend that they relate to the end of the Jewish world at the destruction of Jerusalem. Universalists may take confidence when they find their views of this matter so distinctly sustained by such authority. The conces-

sions of an opponent are always valuable.

The following is from the 4th section of Dr Macknight's Preface to 2 Thessalonians, entitled 'Different comings of Christ are spoken of in the New Testament.'

'In this article, I propose to show that there are other comings of Christ spoken of in the Scripture, besides his coming to judgment; and that there are other things besides this mundane system, whose end is there foretold; and that it is of the other matters the apostles speak, when they represent the day of their Master, and the end of all things, as at hand.

First, then, in the prophetic writings of the Jews, (2 Sam. xxii. 10, 12. Psal. xcvii. 2—5. Isa. xix. 1.) great exertions of the Divine power, whether for the salvation or destruction of nations, are called the coming, the appearance, the presence of God. Hence it was natural for the apostles, who were Jews, to call any signal and evident interposition of Christ, as governor of the world, for the accomplishment of

His purposes, His coming, and His day: accordingly, those exertions of His power and providence, whereby he destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, abrogated the Mosaic institutions, and established the Gospel, are called by the apostles His coming and day: not only in allusion to the ancient prophetic language, but because Christ himself, in his prophecy concerning these events, recorded Matt. xxiv. has termed them the coming of the Son of man, in allusion to the following prophecy of Daniel, of which his own prophecy is an explication: Dan. vii. 13. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days. And they brought him near before him. 14. And there was given him dominion, and glory and a kingdom; that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. prophecy, the Jewish doctors, with one consent, attribute to the Messiah, and of that temporal kingdom which they expected was to be given Him. Further, they supposed, He would erect that temporal kingdom by great and visible exertions of His power for the destruction of His enemies; but they little suspected that themselves were of the number of those enemies whom He was to destroy; and that His kingdom was to be established upon the ruin of their state. Yet that was the true meaning of the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. For while the Jewish nation continued in Judea, and observed the institutions of Moses, they violently opposed the preaching of the Gospel, by which the Messiah was to reign over all people, nations, and languages. Wherefore, that the everlasting kingdom might be established effectually, it was necessary that Jerusalem and the Jewish state should be destroyed by the Roman armies. Now, since our Lord foretold this sad catastrophe in the words of the prophet Daniel, Matt. xxiv. 30, And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory; and after describing every particular of it with the greatest exactness, seeing he told his disciples, ver. 34, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled; can there be any doubt that the apostles (who, when they wrote their epistles, certainly understood the true import of this prophecy,) by their Master's coming and by the end of all things, which they represent as at hand, mean, his coming to destroy Jerusalem, and to put an end to the institutions of Moses? It is no objection to this, that when the apostles heard Christ declare, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down, they connected the end of the world or age with that event. Matt. xxiv. 3.

Tell us when these things shall be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age? For as the Jewish doctors divided the duration of the world into three ages; the age before the law, the age under the law, and the age under the Messiah; the apostles knew that the age under the law was to end when the age under the Messiah began; and, therefore, by the end of the age, they meant; even at that time, not the end of the world, but the end of the age under the law, in which the Jews had been greatly oppressed by the heathers. And although they did not understand the purpose for which their Master was to come, nor the true nature of his kingdom, nor suspect that he was to make any change in the institutions of Moses; yet when they wrote their epistles, being illuminated by the Holy Ghost, they certainly knew that the institutions of Moses were to be abolished; and that their Master's kingdom was not a temporal but a spiritual dominion, in which all people, nations, and languages, were to be governed, not by external force, but by the operation of truth upon their minds, through the preaching of

the Gospel.

"Further, that the apostles, by the coming of Christ, which they represented as at hand when they wrote their epistles, meant His coming to establish His spiritual kingdom over all people, nations, and languages, and not his coming to put an end to this mundane system, is evident from what Christ himself told them, Matt. xvi. 28. 'There be some standing here, who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.' And agreeably to this account of the coming of Christ, and of the end of all things, I observe, that every passage of their epistles in which the apostles have spoken of these things as at hand, may, with the greatest propriety, be interpreted of Christ's coming to establish His everlasting kingdom over all people, nations, and languages, by destroying Jerusalem, putting an end to the law of Moses, and spreading the Gospel through the world. Thus, 1 Cor. x. 11. These things—are written for our admonition, upon whom the end of the ages are come,' means the end of the age under the law, and the beginning of the age under the Messiah. Phil. iv. 5. 'Let your moderation be known to all men: the Lord is nigh: ' namely, to destroy the Jews, your greatest adversaries. Heb. ix. 26. 'But now once, at the conclusion of the ages,' the Jewish Jubilees, 'he hath been manifested to abolish sin offering, by the sacrifice of Himself.' Heb. x. 25. Exhorting one another daily; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,' the day of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem and the Jewish state. Ver. 37. 'For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come, and will not tarry.'

James v. 7. 'Wherefore, be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.' Ver. 8. Be ye also patient, strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord,' to destroy the Jews. your persecutors, 'draweth nigh.' Ver. 9. 'Behold the Judge standeth before the door.' 1 Pet. iv. 7. 'The end of all things,' the end of Jerusalem, and of the temple, and of all the Mosiac institutions, 'hath approached. Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.' 1 John ii. 18. Young 'children, it is the last hour' of the Jewish state; 'and as ye have heard' from Christ, in His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, that 'antichrist cometh, so now there are many antichrists, whence we know that it is the last hour' of the Jewish state.

2. "There is another coming of Christ spoken of by the apostles, different likewise from his coming to judge the world, and to put an end to the present state of things; viz. his coming to destroy the man of sin. 2 Thess. ii. 8. 'Him the Lord will consume by the breath of his mouth, and will render ineffectual by the bright shining of his coming.' This singular event, which will contribute greatly to the honor of God, and the good of his church, being accomplished by a visible and extraordinary interposition of the power of Christ in the government of the world, is, agreeably to the Scripture style, fitly called 'the coming of the Lord;' and 'the bright shining of his coming;' but this coming is nowhere in the Scriptures

said to be at hand.

3. "There is likewise a day, or coming of Christ, spoken of by Paul, different from His coming to judgment, and from both the former comings: I mean His releasing His people from their present trial, by death. 1 Cor. i. 8. 'He also will confirm you unto the end, without accusation, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Philip. i. 6. 'He who hath begun in you a good work will be completing it until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It is true, the release of Christ's servants from their present trial, by death, is accomplished, for the most part, by no extraordinary display of His power; yet it is fitly enough called His day and coming; because by His appointment all men die; and by His power each is carried to his own place after death. Besides, his servants in particular, being put on their duty, like soldiers, must remain at their several posts, till released by their commander; and when he releases them, He is fitly said to come for that purpose.

4. "Besides all these, there is a day or coming of the Lord to judge the world, and to put an end to the present state of things. This coming, Christ himself has promised. Matt. xvi. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his work.' Now, this being a real, personal appearing of Christ in the body, is more properly than any other of His comings called the day, and coming of Christ.—And the purpose of it being more important than those of His other comings, the exertions of His power, for accomplishing them will be most signal and glorious. Hence this coming is, with great propriety, termed, 'the revelation of Jesus Christ,' and 'the day' of His revelation, 'when he shall be glorified in his saints, and admired of all them who believe.'"

With regard to a yet future day of judgment, it will be noticed, that the Doctor, though he has, for the sake of rescuing Christianity from an otherwise fatal objection, frankly given up all the passages which have been usually relied upon in support of the sentiment, still betrays his desire to save a piece from the wreck, for the subsistence of his sectarian opinion. This he attempts in his remarks on the 'fourth' coming of Christ. In those remarks, we must say, he has evinced great inconsistency, not to say insincerity. We wish it were in our power to believe the Doctor perfectly honest in what he there says. Let the reader re-examine it. He then finds but a single text in proof of a yet future coming of Christ to judgment. And what is it? Matt. xvi. 27: 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his work.' This, he avers, is a 'real, personal appearing of Christ'-- more important than the purposes of his other comings.' Will the reader believe, that Dr Macknight himself has, in another place, produced this passage, or the remaining part of it, to prove that this very coming was at the destruction of Jerusalem? See his language under the first division: 'Further, that the apostles, by the coming of Christ, which they represented as at hand when they wrote their epistles, meant His coming to establish His spiritual kingdom over all people, nations and languages, and NOT His coming to put an end to this mundane system, is evident from what Christ himself told them, Matt xvi. 28, [the very verse after the above, if There be some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.' This, then, both was and was not an event to take place at the end of this mundane system-according to Dr Macknight. We leave the Dr with this mortifying contradiction, and the reader with the rest of his remarks, which are not contradictory, but natural, consistent and useful.

ART. XXXVI.

The Danger and Safety of Sinners.

I propose, in this article, to offer a few thoughts on the dangers to which sinners are exposed, and the grounds of safety which revelation discloses to them. These are topics of more than ordinary moment. Men are sinners, and by their sins they have exposed their dearest interests to jeopardy; but they are also the 'offspring of God,' and the objects of his love and care, and there must of course, somewhere, be safety for them. These, it would seem, are indisputable facts.

When considered, therefore, simply in themselves, these are subjects of deep concern; but when we take into consideration the gross misapprehensions which have been entertained in regard to them, and the lamentable uses which have been made of these misapprehensions, they assume a new, and peculiarly high importance. They are, on most occasions, made a leading topic of conversation among religious people. There are indeed, but few subjects, if any, upon which Christians, whether clergymen or laymen, dwell with greater frequency, or more earnest and agonizing concern. There is certainly no one to which a greater share of ministerial attention is devoted. To point out to mankind the dangers which threaten their soul's eternal interests, and to warn them to flee from the gathering storm to the ark of safety, is everywhere deemed a paramount object in the labors of the pulpit.

And that it is a duty of a minister of the gospel to warn his hearers of all the real dangers which beset them, that he should do it in the most faithful, earnest and moving manner; and, that this is a duty of great importance, will be admitted on all hands. But in the performance of this high duty, great caution and prudence should be used. The preacher may, in describing the dangers of sinners, throw so many uncertainties around the prospect of obtaining an interest in Christ and his salvation, as to discourage them, and prevent their seeking it.

This, it is to be feared, is frequently done.

The value of divine and eternal favors may be wonderfully lessened, in the view of a sinner, by a supposed uncertainty of obtaining them. The highest may appear to him as not worth his efforts, provided the acquisition of it be exceedingly doubt-

ful, and the certainty of retaining the possession of it very small. To a rational mind, 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' derive their superior value, not so much from their abundance and heavenly character, as from the safe ground upon which they rest, and the success which is sure to crown their influences. They are not only unsearchable, but durable and imperishable riches, treasured up and kept for us in an ark of perfect and eternal safety. With this view of them, the sinner will feel an inducement to seek them earnestly and resolutely. There is no fear of failure to dishearten or retard him in his pursuits.

Christ is said to be 'God's unspeakable gift;' but he is so only on the ground that he will infallibly and fully 'finish the work which the Father sent him into the world to do.' In the same proportion as uncertainty is associated, in the mind, with the complete success of his mission, his value is reduced,

and the inducement to seek lessened.

He is called, 'the wisdom of God, and the power of God;' and our apostle affirms that he 'is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; and he further assures us, that even our 'life is hid with Christ in God.' Hence we are required, and very justly, it would seem, to honor him as we honor the Father,'- to believe in him, 'to follow him as dear children;' 'to take his yoke upon us; and to learn of him that we may find rest to our souls.' These things are vehemently urged upon us by religious teachers, as solemn and imperious duties. But in their description of Christ, and of the principles and results of his administration, do these teachers furnish us with any rational inducements to comply with these earnest importunities? Do they show us that there is more security in the present or future condition and interests of the world, since 'all judgment was committed to the Son,' than there was before? If the dangers of mankind are equally as numerous, and as great, with Christ as without him, what rational inducement have we to render him a higher honor, or to repose in him a higher confidence, or to yield him a readier and more implicit obedience, than we do the world? Certainly none at all.

It is the safety associated with him and his doctrine, which gives to Jesus his incomparable worth, and his high and rational claim to the universal trust, obedience and homage of sinners. Without this, he would be valueless, and even repul-

sive, one on whom no reliance could reasonably be placed. There is one great danger to which sinners are exposed. Preachers are in the habit of describing the Redeemer and his government in such a manner, as to exhibit no inducement to love him, to honor him, to trust in him, or to follow him. There is no danger that Christ will ever harm or desert any one whom he 'came to save,' and 'for whom he gave himself a ransom;' or, that he will not, eventually, 'raise them all up' to incorruption and immortality; but there is great danger that, by misrepresentations of his real character, and the glorious results of his mission, many will be deceived, and drag out a miserable life amid groundless doubts and fears, and the vices which are inseparable from them.

Sinners are also in danger of suffering severely, by misapprehensions of the gospel. This 'word of truth' has 'brought

to light life and immortality.'

The life to come, therefore, has very justly been deemed a subject of higher importance, and one which has higher claims upon our devout and earnest attention, than the present. If we act wisely, we shall, undoubtedly, cherish a high-

er and more intense regard for it.

But then, we should make ourselves acquainted with the circumstances and facts which give to the future life its superior importance and value. We ought to know that these are not derived, merely, nor chiefly, from its unending duration; but from this, in connexion with the superior blessings and comforts which it secures to us. Existence, in any state, is an object of rational desire and interest to no being, any farther than it is associated with conveniences and the means of

enjoyment.

If, therefore, the future life, great as it is by the endless perpetuity of its continuance, be associated with uncertainties and dangers correspondingly numerous and great, it is, in reality, worth no more than the present. The superior value which has universally been attached to it, is certainly visionary and groundless. The very circumstance, that it is surrounded by such uncertainties and dangers, completely destroys it. All things considered, it is obviously, with respect to countless millions of the human race, of less value than no life at all. Nonentity itself is preferable to endless existence in a state of hopeless suffering.

Who would deliberately choose, or accept, immortality of

being, if aware at the time, that there were five chances out of ten, or, even one chance out of a million, of becoming an interminable sufferer by so doing? Who would rush upon an experiment fraught with a hazard so truly fearful and overwhelming? Surely, no one except an idiot or a madman. The truly wise and prudent would shrink with horror from

such an enterprise.

There are vast numbers, in modern excitements, falsely, if not profanely, called 'revivals of religiou,' who are thrown into deep agony of mind under an imaginary discovery of their danger, that is, of their exposedness to the endless indignation of Heaven, and the torments of hell. Now, while under the dominion of this delusion, how greatly would these miserable victims of superstition be relieved and comforted, by a solemn assurance from the Almighty, that death would terminate their existence!

But alas! these people have totally misapprehended the true sources of their danger. They suppose them to be in God, and in the principles and results of his government; whereas, they are all to be found in themselves; in their religious leaders; and in the traditions which they learn from them. Religious bigots and zealots have been the authors of all the dangers which cause so many to tremble and quake on witnessing the pantomimic manœuvres in the revival meetings of the day. They made them themselves; their successors in office keep them alive, as new publishers keep in being the fairy tales of old romances; and as opportunities occur, new victims, trembling and shrieking, as though the spectres which have terrified them were all realities, are plunged in among those human vagaries, called dangers, the dangers to which the souls of sinners are exposed.

Now, I have no objection to a full and proper exposure of all the dangers by which mankind are surrounded, and by which the security and peace of their bodies or spirits are menaced. I sincerely wish that this was done. But I have a strong objection to the spread and perpetuation of false and imaginary dangers; and also, to those intemperate and stormy methods of describing real ones, which tend to produce fright,

and to overcome reason and judgment.

All such measures are injurious and reprehensible. They increase dangers instead of guarding against them. A frightened sinner, and, especially, one driven to the very brink of

despair, has but a sorry chance for reformation. He is not in the way which will be most likely to turn him from his iniquities. There are ten chances to one, that in his fright he will run headlong into grosser follies; plunge deeper into dissipation; and eventually drown himself in blacker crimes. Godliness is cool, and self-collected. It deigns not to dwell in the heart where a storm of fright and terror is raging.

Practical religion and virtue are also dispassionate and sober things. To awaken them in the heart of a sinner, it is not necessary first to set the world on fire, and to burn him out in the flame. To give them strength, and vigor, and value, they need not to pass through a process of fermentation. Those are the purest and most durable, which have never been melt-

ed down in the crucible of a fiery excitement.

What, kind reader, is a frightened christian good for? He surely is good for nothing at home. What is he good for abroad? Nothing, and worse than nothing—a noisy disturber of his neighbors' peace. And what is he worth in the church of Christ? Nothing. He is as useless there, as a terrified soldier in an army. He is, indeed, worse than useless. He is a real injury, because he dispirits and hinders those, who would, otherwise, move courageously and calmly on in their christian course.

Why then, let me ask, are there so many frightened sinners, and frightened christians among us? and why do they hug their fears and terrors with such unyielding tenacity? I answer, because they have been erroneously taught. ligious guides have lead them astray from the truth. Instead of giving them timely and affectionate warning, with respect to the real dangers which beset them from their own passions and appetites, from the follies and vices of their associates, and from the temptations and corruptions of the world, they have amused them with remote and fictitious ones; and without once suspecting that 'the lips of their priests have not retained knowledge,' and least of all, that they have, long since, left it for fables and phantoms, the deluded creatures are incessantly gazing into eternity, panick struck with the apprehension, that their principal dangers, and, in fact, all about which they need to be concerned, are there.

Could they obtain a satisfactory assurance of escaping the endless curse of their Maker at an imaginary day of general retribution in the future world, they would feel as though they were free from dangers, and had nothing to fear. But they are grossly mistaken; and this error is, itself, one of the most imminent dangers which can beset a sinner. None of our real dangers are to be found in God—in the transactions of his government, properly speaking, nor in any of his retributions either in this world or the world to come; but they are all in ourselves,—in the deceptive and corrupting influence of those with whom we associate; and in the temptations to unlawful pursuits—to impiety, and folly, and vice from the world in which we live.

But there is another danger to which sinners are exposed, and which, though by no means a small one, I fear is too generally overlooked. I allude to the danger of being deceived by the heated and bewildered imagination of their preachers. Even ministers of the gospel, and those too, who are most sincerely devoted to the cause of their Master, are not, in all cases, exempt from 'a zeal which is not according to knowl-

edge.'

Such instances may occur, and they undoubtedly do frequently occur, even among christian ministers, who are, intentionally, the most zealously engaged in the promotion of true, vital religion; but whenever, and wherever this happens, the preacher will most certainly 'darken counsel by words without knowledge.' Discovering, in the dark vista of his own disordered imagination, a thousand ideal and distant dangers, he will point them out to his hearers in a manner, and with an intonation of voice so solemn and agonizing, that they will truly appear like realities rolling upon them in awful grandeur and with the appalling pomp of unlimited and everlasting desolation.

With his own feelings set on fire by the sparks struck from his own fancy, and his lips and his language glowing intensely with the flame, he will dwell incessantly upon these tremendous fictions. In the language of the prophet, he will lead his hearers 'from mountain to hill, and from hill to mountain, till they forget their resting place,' and feel as though there were none in the whole universe. He will dilate with a most affecting eloquence on the unspeakable calamity of falling into the hands of God—of enduring his everlasting displeasure—of eternally losing the soul—of being cast off forever by the Almighty, and placed beyond the hope or the reach of mercy. Now, all this is mere rant, the ebullition of a wild and fervid

imagination; but still, to millions it is clothed with overpowering terrors. There is no more danger that God will do us a real injury, or suffer any irremediable evil to come upon us here, or hereafter, than there is that every father in Boston will put out the eyes of his children, and turn them into the street to perish without pity or protection. The only real danger of sinners is in sin itself. Let them shun this, and

they have nothing to fear.

Again, it is possible that the preacher, in the effervescence of his zeal, will omit to point the trembling sinner to the true ground of safety, or, if he pretend to do this, that he will inclose it by so many difficult conditions to be performed by the helpless creature himself, as to render it, in fact, no real ground of safety at all. This is often done The poor, awakened sinner, greatly alarmed and bewildered by unnatural and terrific descriptions of God and the retributions of his government, is left without a gleam of hope, or the faintest prospect of relief or mercy. He is deeply and strangely agitated, but cannot tell why. He trembles at the thought of his Maker, who, in truth, has never done him the least harm. He tries to find a satisfactory reason for his singular restlessness and perturbation, but he cannot. He is in a complete maze—a distracting quandary, the spell of which he is unable to break. To whatever direction he turns, nothing but a wide waste of darkness, and danger, and wo, meets his eye.

Now, this state of mind is in a high degree injurious. It prevents the sinner from discovering and avoiding the very evils which endanger his peace. It is like that of a traveller, who, in passing through a wilderness infested by poisonous reptiles of the humbler kinds only, should keep his eyes perpetually fixed on lofty and remote objects to avoid tygers and anacondas. Vigilance with respect to these would only increase his perils, for he would be less likely to escape the pangs of the more puny instruments of destruction which lay around his feet. So the sinner who is instructed to exercise his chief concern about distant and eternal evils, and gives earnest heed to his instructions, may be rendered more fatally careless about the things which compose the real dangers of

human life.

But no dangers exist, and none should be held up to the view of sinners, which tend to awaken despair of the mercy of God, or their endless destination. In the midst of all their

dangers there is an ark of safety for them. They still have a friend, a compassionate, all-sufficient, ever-faithful friend. It is Jesus. He is the friend of sinners, and will eternally remain so. In describing the dangers which menace them, he should always be kept full in their view. No impediments should be thrown around him which will cause him to appear inaccessible to them. Art, and eloquence, and pathos are grossly abused when they are used for such a purpose.

If it be important to know the dangers to which we are exposed, it cannot be less important to know the real grounds of safety, if such exist. To feel a deep conviction of mind that the universe does not present a scene of boundless jeopardy; but that there is a power in which, in all conditions, and all worlds, and in respect to every creature, there is perfect and eternal safety, must, it would seem, be highly favorable to pure religion and sound morality. This power is disclosed by revelation. 'Safety is of the Lord.' Now if we credit this divine testimony, we have learned by it how to avoid all danger, and to enjoy present and everlasting safety. It is to stay ourselves for time and eternity upon God. Every thing under his care and control is perfectly safe. The traditions of men, I know, teach differently. According to these, our greatest danger is of the Lord. But if we credit the divine testimony, we must discredit those traditions. Both cannot be founded in truth. Let us say then, with an apostle, 'Let God be true and every man a liar.' Let us trust in him and not be afraid, for 'in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and he has become our salvation.